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SUNRISE 06:17 AM

PRAYER TIMINGS

FAJR 05:00 AM

DHUHR 11:56 PM

ASR 03:06 PM

MAGHRIB 05:29 PM

ISHA 06:42 PM

20

CHORDS AND
NOTES PUT
LISTENERS IN
THRILL

INBRIEF

HM’S GREETINGS TO
KING OF CAMBODIA

His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik has sent a cable of greetings to His Majesty King Norodom Sihamoni, of the Kingdom of Cambodia, on the occasion of his country’s National Day. In his cable, His Majesty wished the King of Cambodia continued success in leading the friendly people of Cambodia to achieve their aspirations for progress, stability and prosperity, hoping that the cooperative relations between the two countries would continue to grow and develop.

FIRST ROBOTIC
SURGERY IN OMAN



The Royal Hospital has successfully performed its first robotic surgery, a step that embodies the future vision of the health sector towards excellence and the adoption of advanced technologies in the field of microsurgery. The step constitutes a national medical breakthrough to be added to a series of achievements in the medical sector in the Sultanate of Oman. **DETAILS ON P2**

Oman fully committed to
realise net-zero strategy

THE SULTANATE OF OMAN affirmed its commitment to achieving environmental and climate goals, stressing that climate change presents a major economic and developmental opportunity with investing in clean energy, sustainable infrastructure and climate intelligence becoming the engines of growth in the 21st century.

This came in a speech delivered by Dr Abdullah bin Ali al Amri, Chairman of the Environment Authority, at the meeting of the COP30 Leaders’ Summit in Belém, Brazil, held ahead of the annual United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP30), which will take place will take place from November 10 to 21 with the participation of 200 countries.

CARBON NEUTRALITY
In his address, the chairman of the Environment Authority said that Oman Vision 2040 has placed the requirements of the three environmental agreements as a key national priority, and has moved forward with implementing the national carbon neutrality strategy (Oman Net-Zero), activating the National Carbon Register and developing policies under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement in addition to promoting renewable energy



Dr Abdullah bin Ali al Amri, Chairman of the Environment Authority, at the meeting of the COP30 Leaders’ Summit.

“Oman is implementing numerous climate change adaptation projects, including an early warning system, flood protection systems and construction of resilient cities.”

DR ABDULLAH AL AMRI

projects.

He pointed to the serious concerns about the impact of climate change on the entire ecosystem, explaining that the phenomena witnessed on planet Earth, including human-induced changes, rising temperatures, melting glaciers, loss of biodiversity and forest fires, leave no room for doubt that climate change is an undeniable reality. This places national and global responsibilities on everyone to accelerate action, particularly after the climate report, issued in October, revealed that climate action is still falling short of

expectations.

He added: “The planet’s ecosystem is a single, indivisible system, which underscores the necessity of reviewing the current global environmental institutional framework. This framework operates with outdated governance principles to manage present and future issues, leading to wasted efforts and slow procedures. Institutional governance is fundamental to the success of work systems, the standardisation of efforts, and the ability to confront challenges. The Sultanate of Oman is implementing numerous climate change adaptation projects, including an early warning system, flood protection systems and the construction of resilient and sustainable cities, in addition to expanding the adoption of nature-based solutions.”

The chairman of the Environmental Authority concluded his speech by affirming that the Sultanate of Oman believes that development and sustainability complement each other and that achieving a just and equitable transition is the way to ensure a secure future and a prosperous and sustainable economy and that preserving the environment is the best investment in the future and the true foundation for the well-being of peoples. — ONA

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SHORT TAKES



The conference also honoured speakers and participants.

CONFERENCE ON HEART DISEASE TREATMENT HELD

MUSCAT: The Medical City Hospital for Military and Security Services organised the Heart Conference 2025, under the auspices of Brigadier Dr Saleh bin Saud al Abri, Director-General of the Medical City Hospital for Military and Security Services, on Saturday.

The conference aimed to review the latest scientific developments in the field of cardiovascular diseases through scientific lectures presented by a select group of consultants and specialists from the Sultanate of Oman, in addition to interactive discussion sessions on the latest diagnostic and treatment methods and modern technologies in cardiology.

The conference included three main sessions that addressed the latest developments in the diagnosis and treatment of heart diseases, as well as honouring the speakers and participants.

— ONA

WORKSHOP FOCUSES ON SKILLS THROUGH ENCYCLOPAEDIA



The session explored themes including the educational goals of encyclopaedia.

KHASAB: The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth organised an introductory workshop titled ‘Employing Applied and Technical Future Skills in the Omani Encyclopedia for Young People’ at the Department of Culture, Sports and Youth headquarters in Musandam Governorate.

The session, moderated by Fatima bint Khalifa al Hawsaniyah, Director of the Omani Encyclopedia Department, explored several themes including the educational goals of the encyclopaedia, its link to school curricula, and ways to design interactive learning activities that strengthen students’ understanding of Omani identity and culture.

Dr Fatima bint Rashid al Alayaniyah presented a paper on ‘Employing Applied and Technical Future Skills in the Omani Encyclopedia for Young People’, emphasising that the encyclopaedia serves as a national platform for building future-ready skills among students. She noted that it supports national efforts to integrate culture, education, and technology, fostering a creative generation equipped for the future.

Dr Al Alayani highlighted that the encyclopaedia provides a comprehensive knowledge resource that educators can utilise innovatively through classroom activities and applied projects to enhance critical thinking, creativity and research skills, while deepening students’ connection to their environment and heritage through digital and interactive media.

Researcher Khadija bint Ali al Mufarjiyah also presented a paper titled ‘The Role of the Omani Encyclopedia for Young People in Enriching the Knowledge Building of Learners.’

She underlined the importance of authentic educational resources in shaping thought and identity, stressing that the encyclopaedia enriches young learners’ knowledge across literature, art, history, science and society, while reinforcing their cultural identity.

The workshop concluded with a dialogue session for educators, offering an opportunity to exchange ideas on effectively integrating the encyclopaedia into teaching practices.

— ONA

Port Sultan Qaboos welcomes first cruise of the season

MUSCAT: Port Sultan Qaboos (PSQ) in Muscat welcomed the cruise ship *Mein Schiff 4*, operated by the German company TUI, carrying 2,386 tourists from around the world, marking the start of the 2025-2026 cruise season.

The launch, organised by Asyad Ports and Freezones in cooperation with the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism (MoHT), reflects ongoing public-private sector collaboration to position Oman as a premier



Mein Schiff 4, carrying 2,386 tourists, anchored in Muscat.

destination for global maritime tourism.

With the arrival of *Mein Schiff 4*, Sultan Qaboos Port is set for an active cruise season, underscoring Oman’s growing appeal as a regional maritime hub. Maritime tourism remains a key focus of the ministry and Asyad Group under the Oman Vision 2040, aimed at diversifying the economy and enhancing tourist offerings across Oman.

— ONA

Royal Hospital performs first robotic surgery

THE Royal Hospital has successfully performed its first robotic surgery, a step that embodies the future vision of the health sector towards excellence and the adoption of advanced technologies in the field of microsurgery.

The step constitutes a national medical breakthrough to be added to a series of achievements in the medical sector in the Sultanate of Oman.

Dr Qais bin Mohammed al Hooti, Consultant Urologist at the Royal Hospital, said that a urological surgery was performed involving a renal pelvic reconstruction and correction procedure for a patient suffering from ureteral stenosis.

The operation lasted approximately two hours and was successful.

He pointed out that the surgical robot represents the pinnacle of advancement in the world of microsurgery. It gives surgeons unprecedented control and three-dimensional vision, enabling them to execute precise movements beyond the capabilities of the human hand, as well as easily accessing difficult and deep areas within the surgical field.

He stated that this system reduces the size of surgical incisions and blood loss, accelerating patient recovery while simultaneously increasing safety and reducing complications thus representing a qualitative leap towards more efficient and higher-quality surgery.

He added that the Royal Hospital seeks to expand the use of this technology to encompass various surgical specialities, such as urology, colorectal surgery,



Royal Hospital seeks to expand the use of robotic technology to encompass various surgical specialities.

Considered a national medical breakthrough, the surgery can be added to a series of achievements in Oman’s medical sector

obstetrics and gynecology, hepatobiliary and gastrointestinal surgery, and cardiothoracic surgery, with a focus on training and developing national talent, so that the Sultanate of Oman becomes a leading regional centre in this field.

He stressed that this achievement is a practical embodiment of the goals of Oman Vision 2040 in building an advanced healthcare system based on innovation and modern technologies.

It strengthens the healthcare system and supports the Sultanate of Oman’s aspirations to empower Omani personnel and prepare a generation of surgeons and technicians qualified in smart surgical techniques, thus solidifying its position as a leading regional centre in digital surgery and robotic medicine.

The surgical team overseeing the operation expressed their pride in this achievement, which

represents a turning point in the history of Omani surgery.

The surgical robot allows for a superior level of precision and control, reducing surgical complications and accelerating patient recovery compared to conventional methods.

They noted that this achievement would not have been possible without the continuous support of the Ministry of Health and the integrated efforts of the surgical, medical, and technical teams, within the framework of an ambitious national strategy aimed at enhancing the skills of Omani personnel and enabling them to utilise the latest global technologies.

The introduction of the surgical robot at the Royal Hospital represents a qualitative leap in specialised medical services, aligning with the transformation underway in the Sultanate of Oman’s health sector as part of the goals of Oman Vision 2040.

— ONA

Walkway is new crown jewel of Al Kamil W’al Wafi

BALQEES AL ORAIMI
MUSCAT, NOV 8

The development of Al Zama Walkway in the Wilayat of Al Kamil W’al Wafi, Al Sharqiyah South Governorate, continues to make steady progress as part of a unique initiative aimed at preserving the aflaj and dates palm farms.

Designed as an open heritage trail, Al Zama Walkway connects the old quarters of the wilayat with the surrounding aflaj, offering visitors a distinctive experience that combines walking through nature with exploring the region’s rich architectural and agricultural legacy.

The development includes restoring traditional stone pathways, landscaping green spaces, and adding rest areas



Visitors and heritage enthusiasts have expressed their admiration for the project.

and service facilities that harmonise with the village’s traditional character. The walkway also features street lights that highlight the beauty of the aflaj and farms, creating a serene and enchanting atmosphere that captures the spirit of authentic Omani life.

An important aspect of the initiative is the active involvement of local residents and nearby farm owners in maintenance and beautification efforts — a community-driven approach that strengthens the sense of belonging and ensures sustainable preservation of the area’s heritage and identity.

Visitors and heritage enthusiasts have expressed their admiration for the project, noting that such initiatives breathe new life into ancient oases and open

new horizons for agri-tourism. With its unique combination of sea, mountains, and fertile oases, Al Sharqiyah South offers a naturally diverse and picturesque setting that perfectly embodies Oman’s timeless beauty.

The Al Zama Walkway project underscores Al Sharqiyah South Governorate’s growing role in broadening Oman’s eco- and heritage-tourism landscape in line with Oman Vision 2040, which seeks to position sustainable tourism as a key economic driver and a means of showcasing Oman’s national identity to the world.

Al Zama Walkway stands as a new icon of balance between heritage and development, reaffirming that true progress thrives when tradition and innovation walk side by side.



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SHORT TAKES



It was planned to set up a specialised research centre for the Arabian leopard in Dhofar.

WORKSHOP PROPOSES NEW ARABIAN LEOPARD STRATEGY

SALALAH: A scientific workshop on updating the Arabian Leopard Conservation Strategy (2025–2030), organised by the Directorate-General of Environment in Dhofar Governorate, concluded in Salalah with a set of recommendations to strengthen national and regional efforts to protect the endangered Arabian leopard and preserve its natural habitats.

The workshop emphasised the importance of renewing strategic objectives based on the achievements of the previous plan (2014–2025). It also proposed the formation of a national committee, chaired by the Environment Authority and comprising relevant institutions, to oversee the implementation of the new strategy and ensure coordination between stakeholders.

Among the key recommendations was the establishment of a specialised research centre for the Arabian leopard in Dhofar Governorate to serve as a scientific reference point supporting studies, field monitoring and conservation efforts. Participants also called for updating environmental legislation to provide stronger protection for the Arabian leopard, its prey and its natural habitats, as well as for expanding nature reserves across Oman. — ONA

WELLNESS DAY PROMOTES DIABETES AWARENESS IN NIZWA



AMAL AL RIYAMI
NIZWA, NOV 8

In observance of World Diabetes Day on November 14, the College of Nursing at Sultan Qaboos University organised a Community Diabetes Wellness Day at Al Aqur in Nizwa. The initiative was held in cooperation with Nizwa Health City, the Directorate-General of Health Services in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate, and Nizwa Polyclinic.

This year’s global theme, ‘Know More and Do More for Diabetes at Work,’ underscored the importance of awareness, early detection, and preventive practices in both daily life and workplace settings.

More than 20 interactive educational and screening stations were coordinated by faculty and students from the College of Nursing, in collaboration with healthcare professionals. The stations offered guidance on diabetes management, medication adherence, foot and kidney health, and maternal well-being.

Dr Nasser al Salmi, Head of the Adult Health and Critical Care Department at the College, emphasised that enhancing community awareness is vital to reducing the burden of diabetes and promoting healthier lifestyles.

He noted that informed decision-making plays a crucial role in preventing complications and improving quality of life.

Restoration of Muqazzah Mosque in Izki completed

IZKI: The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism announced the completion of the restoration and maintenance of the historic Muqazzah Mosque in the Wilayat of Izki in Al Dakhiliyah Governorate last week.

The project is part of the ministry’s ongoing efforts to preserve heritage buildings and historical religious landmarks across the Sultanate of Oman.

The Muqazzah Mosque is among the oldest mosques in the Wilayat of Izki, dating back more than four centuries. It is distinguished by its authentic Omani architectural style reflecting the beauty of traditional



The renovation process preserved the mosque’s authentic character and retained its original structure.

artisanship in construction and decoration.

The mosque begins with an outer courtyard on the eastern and southern sides, containing a small mihrab parallel to the inner one. The original large wooden lintels of its entrances have been preserved to maintain their historical value.

The prayer hall has two circular columns connected by traditional arches that form the niche (mihrab) facade. The mihrab itself is a rare artistic masterpiece, adorned with 18 ceramic tiles of varying shapes and colours, including blue and grassy hues, and decorated with

motifs featuring birds and stars in a unique visual harmony.

The restoration work involved rebuilding of damaged sections using the original stones and applying moisture-proofing materials.

Cracks in the walls, arches and columns were repaired, and the interior and exterior walls were restored with materials that maintain the building’s historical architectural style.

The renovation process preserved the mosque’s authentic character and retained its original structure. — ONA

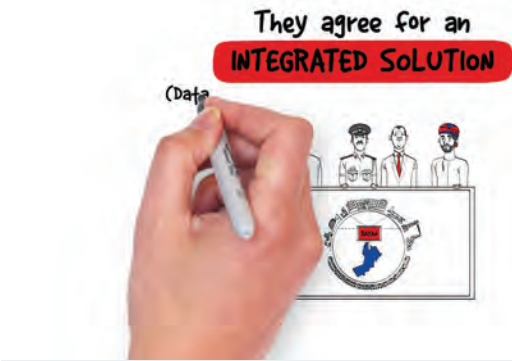
Bayan system simplifies trade, customs in Oman

AFRAH AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 8

In line with rapid global economic and technological transformations, the Sultanate of Oman’s customs operations are entering a new era of innovation through the ‘Bayan’ system — the nation’s unified digital gateway for trade facilitation and customs efficiency.

Developed and managed by the Directorate-General of Customs at the Royal Oman Police, the Bayan system streamlines customs clearance, reduces administrative burdens and strengthens public-private partnerships to simplify trade procedures.

Launched in 2015 as a single-window platform, Bayan replaced manual customs processes with a fully digital system, significantly accelerating clearance times. The platform offers electronic customs clearance, automated data processing, and integrated licensing and permit systems across



Bayan serves over 200,000 users, processing around five million transactions annually.

Bayan offers e-customs clearance, automated data processing, integrated licensing and permit systems across govt bodies

government bodies.

Today, Bayan serves over 200,000 users, processing around five million transactions annually. Automated risk management and instant notifications have enhanced transparency and compliance, reinforcing Oman’s role as a regional trade hub.

The platform has proven particularly valuable for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), enabling them to manage import and export procedures seamlessly

through a single portal. By cutting down on paperwork, reducing time at checkpoints and offering real-time tracking of consignments, Bayan has empowered Omani businesses to compete more effectively in international markets.

Moreover, the system’s integration with regional customs networks supports the GCC Unified Customs Vision, paving the way for smoother cross-border movement of goods and better alignment with global trade standards. This positions Oman not only as a logistics gateway for the region but also as a forward-thinking economy embracing the digital transformation of trade.

Recognised with awards such as the Sultan Qaboos Award for Excellence in eGovernment (2018) and the Arab Digital Economy Award (2025), Bayan stands as a key pillar of Oman Vision 2040, embodying efficiency, integration and innovation in the nation’s journey towards a fully digital economy.

Oman wins three tourism awards at WTM

LONDON: The Sultanate of Oman won three awards at the World Travel Market WTM, Wanderlust 2025, currently taking place in London, in the categories of adventure tourism, heritage and cultural tourism and sustainable tourism. This achievement underscores the Sultanate of Oman’s position as a leading destination offering diverse and authentic experiences.

During the Sultanate of Oman’s participation in the event, the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, through its promotional platform Discover Oman, signed a new strategic partnership with Discover Qatar. This partnership aims to enhance regional tourism cooperation and promote multi-destination travel between Oman and Qatar.

Under the new strategic partnership, the two platforms will collaborate on developing



World Travel Market WTM, Wanderlust 2025, in London.

integrated tourism packages and joint promotional initiatives designed to draw visitors from key international markets, particularly Asia and Europe, to explore both destinations in a single trip. Italy, Spain, and China will serve as pilot markets for the joint cooperation initiative, leveraging the joint representative office in Italy to launch joint promotional events and activities.

The partnership will also include organising

joint promotional tours, unified participation in major international tourism events and exhibitions, and collaboration with leading tourism and travel companies to develop and promote joint packages for destinations that combine the unique cultural and heritage experiences of both the Sultanate of Oman and the State of Qatar.

In addition, the Ministry of Heritage and Tourism, in partnership with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth, announced a project to publish a book about the Sultanate of Oman, highlighting its cultural and tourism significance. The book will be part of a global series of publications focusing on leading luxury destinations worldwide, in collaboration with the international publishing house Assouline, which specialises in luxury books. This initiative aligns with

the tourism marketing strategy which targets people interested in luxury tourism.

The Ministry of Heritage and Tourism also launched the book Oman: Jewel of Arabia, in collaboration with the British-Omani Society and the Embassy of Oman in London. This book documents a 30-day expedition undertaken by a group of young Omanis and British travellers along Oman coast from Ras Al Hadd to Salalah, crossing Al Sharqiyah North and Al Wusta governorates

Oman is also expected to host the 2026 Association of Independent Tour Operators (AITO) conference, coinciding with the association’s 50th anniversary. This conference is one of the most prominent annual events in the travel and tourism sector and aligns with the ministry’s plan to promote Oman’s tourism in the British market next year. — ONA

SPOTLIGHT

SAUD AL ANSARI

IN RECENT YEARS, Oman's cities have undergone a remarkable urban transformation. New residential, commercial and hotel developments have added a modern touch to the skyline, accompanied by major road and infrastructure projects. Amid this growth, an important question arises among experts, investors and citizens alike: Should Oman embrace the era of skyscrapers, or preserve its low-rise architectural character that blends harmoniously with its environment and heritage? Experts agree that this debate goes far beyond aesthetics — it is about identity, sustainability, economy and quality of life.

Many real estate and planning experts believe that vertical expansion is a logical choice given the limited availability of land in central areas.

Real estate investor Mohammed al Salmi explains, "In key areas of Muscat or Salalah, land is scarce and expensive. Building upward maximises space use, and mixed-use towers — combining residential, commercial and hospitality functions — attract foreign investment and boost business tourism."

Salim al Balushi from Muscat says that high-rise construction is not only an economic solution but also a planning necessity. "Uncontrolled horizontal sprawl consumes agricultural and natural land, increases commute times, and deepens car dependency. Compact cities, when designed with strong infrastructure and efficient public transport, are more sustainable and economically viable," he adds.

Younis al Harrasi, CEO of Bayan Real Estate, emphasises the importance of having a national urban design guidelines manual in Oman, ensuring that each area has a distinct urban identity reflecting its nature and local heritage. "In one of our neighbouring countries, there are design manuals specific to each region, which have helped preserve the architectural character and visual identity of every city. It is important for Oman to adopt a similar approach to ensure balanced urban development that is harmonious with its environment and culture," he says.

On the other hand, a number of architects, real estate and planning experts argue that maintaining Oman's human-scaled urban form is essential to protect its cultural identity and social cohesion.

Architect Maryam al Basami says, "Omani cities are known for their calm character, shaded streets, and architecture that

Skyscrapers or low rise, balance is the key

respects nature and climate. We don't want Muscat to turn into a replica of other cities that lost their soul to high-rise urbanisation."

Ahmed al Kharusi, who is interested in Omani heritage, warns that tall towers near historic landmarks can distort the skyline and diminish cultural value. "When skyscrapers rise beside old forts or mosques, they disrupt the sense of place. Preserving the horizontal lines that define Omani architecture is not a luxury. It's a cultural duty to protect the visual memory of our cities," he says.

Environmental engineer Nabil al Amri highlights that towers can worsen the "urban heat island" effect if not designed with adequate shading and natural ventilation. He adds, "Low-rise buildings integrated with horizontal green spaces help reduce heat accumulation and improve air quality within neighbourhoods."

Eng Salim al Maamari stresses the importance of readiness before vertical expansion. "High-density towers demand robust systems for water, electricity and sewage, in addition to efficient public transport. Without these, density becomes a strain rather than an advantage," he says.

From an economic standpoint, real estate investor Abdullah al Maqbali notes, "High-rise zones generate business activity and jobs, but projects must align with real market demand to prevent oversupply, as seen in other regional cities." Most experts

agree that balance is key. Eng Said al Kiyumi proposes that vertical development should be limited to specific commercial corridors linked to public transport, while traditional and historic neighbourhoods remain low-rise. "Unified urban design guidelines should ensure harmony in facades, materials and proportions — reflecting the local identity," he says.

The future of Oman's urban landscape depends on finding a delicate balance between ambition and identity. Between the modern appeal of skyscrapers and the cultural warmth of low-rise architecture lies the opportunity for smart planning and realistic vision — development that fuels progress without compromising authenticity.

“Low-rise buildings integrated with horizontal green spaces help reduce heat accumulation and improve air quality within neighbourhoods.”

NABIL AL AMRI
Environmental engineer

“In key areas of Muscat or Salalah, land is scarce and expensive. Building upward maximises space use, and mixed-use towers - combining residential, commercial and hospitality functions - attract foreign investment and boost business tourism.”

MOHAMMED AL SALMI
Real estate investor



SHORT TAKES



November 20 is the deadline to submit short films between 2 and 20 minutes that explore themes related to women or children.

3RD INTERNATIONAL WOMEN, CHILDREN’S FILM FESTIVAL FROM DEC 15

KABEER YOUSUF MUSCAT, NOV 8

The third edition of the International Women and Children’s Cinema Festival will be held in Muscat from December 15 to 18, the Oman Film Society (OFS) has announced.

Film-makers from Oman and abroad are invited to submit short films between 2 and 20 minutes that explore themes related to women or children. The registration deadline is November 20.

Speaking to Observer, Mohammed bin Abdullah al Ajmi, Chairman of the Oman Film Society, said the festival aims to portray issues affecting women and children to a wider audience.

“This festival is part of our ongoing efforts to highlight humanitarian and social issues impacting women and children through cinema, and to engage global film-makers in meaningful dialogue,” Al Ajmi said.

The festival also seeks to celebrate women’s contributions to the film industry and encourage young film-makers to produce works that reflect real experiences and artistic visions upholding family and social values.

Al Ajmi added that the four-day event is expected to attract film-makers, producers and audiences from across the region, further cementing Oman’s reputation as a hub for creative expression and cross-cultural storytelling.

“All film-makers from within and outside the Sultanate of Oman are invited to participate in this cinematic celebration focusing on women and children,” he added.

UTAS Suhar holds seminar on emotional stability

SIHAM AL SAIDI SUHAR, NOV 8

THE University of Technology and Applied Sciences in Suhar recently organised a symposium titled ‘Psychological Balance’ under the auspices of Shaikh Mohammed bin Abdullah al Busaidy, Wali of Suhar.

The event aimed to raise awareness of the importance of maintaining mental and emotional stability as a foundation for personal growth, academic success and professional performance.

“The symposium reflected the university’s deep commitment to promoting psychological balance and emotional well-being within the academic community. It was inspiring to see such meaningful discussions that connected scientific understanding with real-life experiences. The participation of experts and students alike enriched the dialogue and emphasised the importance of self-awareness and inner peace. At the University of Technology and Applied Sciences – Suhar, we believe that mental wellness is not just support, but a foundation for excellence. This event truly embodied our vision of nurturing balanced, confident and resilient individuals,” Dr Hilal bin Ali al Maqbali, Deputy Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Electronic Systems and Student Services, commented.

The symposium brought together experts, academics, and students to discuss various dimensions of psychological well-being and to explore practical strategies for achieving balance in everyday



The event aimed to raise awareness of the importance of maintaining mental and emotional stability as a foundation for personal growth.

Experts, academics, and students discussed various dimensions of psychological well-being and explored practical strategies

life. It featured three interactive workshops led by distinguished Omani specialists.

The first workshop, presented by Dr Yousuf al Attar, educational and family consultant and Executive Director of Tawazun Centre for Educational and Consulting Services, discussed the concept of psychological balance, influencing factors and strategies to achieve it. Dr Al Attar highlighted that balance requires conscious effort to manage emotions, set priorities and adopt healthy coping mechanisms in a rapidly changing world.

The second session, delivered by Dr Talal al Rawahi, educational

consultant and TV and radio presenter, focused on relationships and social support and their role in enhancing psychological balance. He emphasised that strong social connections and a supportive environment can greatly influence emotional resilience and inner peace.

In the third workshop, Mahmood al Hasani, a psychological specialist, addressed the significance of psychological balance in modern life and its connection to study and work. He encouraged students to practice mindfulness, self-reflection and time management to maintain mental stability.

The event drew active participation from students and faculty members who engaged in discussions and shared personal reflections.

Ali al Hosni, a university student and one of the attendees, commented, “This symposium helped us realise that balance is not about eliminating stress, but about managing it wisely and caring for our mental health.”

The symposium concluded with a call to continue integrating mental health awareness into educational initiatives, reaffirming the university’s commitment to fostering a supportive and balanced learning environment.



Announcement of the tender TND GSI G3 0008/11/2025 for the Supply, Sikaflex 11FC for Al Ghubrah III IWP

GS INIMA (AL GHUBRA) LLC has been awarded with the Engineering, Procurement and Construction of AL GHUBRAH III IWP in Oman, for CAPITAL DESALINATION COMPANY S.A.O.C.

Omani companies are invited to quote their most competitive price **for the supply of 300 pieces of Sikaflex 11FC**. To participate in the bidding please send your quotation in Omani Rial currency , showing delivery date.

With quotation submit copy of CR, copy of VAT certificate and copy of SME card (if any), via e-mail to: **ghubrah.3.site@inima.com**, subject: **TND GSI G3 0008/11/2025** by **13th November 2025 1:00 PM**.



THE ROYAL GUARD OF OMAN

Tender Advertisement

The Royal Guard of Oman, invites tenders for the following:-

Tender Reference	Subject	Grade	Tender Document Fee (Non-refundable)	Submission Date
07/2025	Construction of Villa Complex (Plot No.140) At Madinat Al-Ilam	III & above	SME: R.O. 10/- L.O: R.O. 25/-	16 th Dec 2025

Specialized companies registered in the Projects, Tenders and Local Content Authority with the above-mentioned Grade and the Procurement and Contracts Directorate of the General Directorate of Finance, Royal Guard of Oman, can collect the tender document from the Tender Committee Secretariat, Royal Guard of Oman, Seeb during working hours from **Monday 10th November to Sunday 16th November 2025**.

Wax-sealed Tenders addressed to the Chairman - Tender Committee should be submitted to RGO before 1200 hours on the submission date along with a Tender Bond the name of the Royal Guard of Oman equivalent to 1% (One Percent) of the value of the Tender from any registered Bank in the Sultanate of Oman,. The tenderer shall not reveal his identity other than the tender title and the address mentioned below.

No Tender will be accepted after the submission date. The Royal Guard of Oman reserves the right to accept or reject any Tender without giving reasons.

For more Information: **24637401** or **24637402**.

Tender Committee
P.O Box 381, C.P.O
Postal Code 111

SHUA TREE DRIVE LAUNCHED IN AL BATINAH SOUTH

BARKA: The Environment Department in Al Batinah South Governorate has planted 1,000 seedlings of the Shua tree as part of the national initiative to plant 10 million trees, launched by the Environment Authority in cooperation with several partners.

Musallam bin Mubarak al Mahri, Director of the Environment Department in Al Batinah South, said the initiative reflects the department’s commitment to environmental preservation and community participation.

“Collaboration with local residents and organisations strengthens our shared responsibility to achieve sustainability goals,” he said.

The project is being implemented in partnership with UTAS Al Musannah, and be’ah Company.

— ONA

Investment Manager Report

Ahli Islamic Money Market Fund

On behalf of the Fund Management Board, I am pleased to present the un-audited financial results of ahli Islamic Money Market Fund for the quarter ended 30th Sept 2025:

FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 30 th Sept 2025	30/09/2025
Number of units	67,102,927
Net asset value (RO)	72,368,531
Net asset value per unit (RO)	1.078
Dividend Paid Per Unit (RO)	-
Net profit/(loss)	1,869,399

**As of Sept 30th 2025*

Market Outlook

In September, the Federal Reserve cut its target rate by 25 basis points to 4.00%–4.25%, marking its first reduction of the year and signaling the possibility of two additional cuts before year-end. The move reflects a response to slowing growth alongside persistent inflationary pressures. Inflation data showed the PCE index holding at 2.7% year-over-year in September, unchanged from August, while core PCE remained elevated at 2.9%. These readings highlight sticky inflation that continues to exceed the Fed’s 2% target, reinforcing a cautious policy outlook despite the recent easing.

U.S. Treasury yields eased after the Fed’s rate cut, with the 10-year at 4.15%, 1-month at 4.18%, 3-month at 3.87%, and 6-month at 3.70%. The decline reflects caution amid weak growth and persistent inflation, while the positive 10-2 year spread (0.54%) signals moderate expansion expectations despite uncertainties.

In the GCC, central banks-maintained policy rates in line with the Fed, ensuring currency stability, strong liquidity, and attractive short-term yields.

We believe a cooling inflation and slowdown job creation are setting the stage for more additional rate reductions.



Our Fund remains an attractive option for short term cash management, offering investors both liquidity and competitive returns. The Fund’s performance has been strong and stable.





Financial Statements
for the period ended 30 September 2025
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

	30 Sept 2025	30 Sept 2024	31 Dec 2024
	RO	RO	RO
ASSETS			
Investments	44,956,948	19,106,677	22,277,140
Cash and cash equivalents	27,001,828	9,985,512	9,701,961
Accrued profit on investments	678,497	-	413,389
Total assets	72,637,273	29,092,189	32,392,490
LIABILITIES			
Accruals and other payables	268,743	201,015	93,017
Total liabilities	268,743	201,015	93,017
Total net assets attributable to the Unitholders	72,368,531	28,891,174	32,299,473
Net asset value per unit	1.078	1.030	1.043
	30 Sept 2025	30 Sept 2024	For the Period from 3 March 2024 to 31 Dec 2024
	RO	RO	RO
INCOME			
Profit on investments	2,078,905	550,658	975,740
Foreign exchange gain	4,197	(2,793)	-
Amortization of premium on investments at amortised cost	7,779	-	-
Fair value changes in investments at fair value through profit or loss	30,691	-	-
	2,121,572	547,865	975,740
EXPENSES			
Management fees	207,184	47,812	86,036
Custodian service fees	26,328	8,085	13,792
Foreign exchange loss	-	-	2,822
Fund Management Board fee	1,500	-	1,500
General and administration	17,162	10,070	10,173
	252,174	65,967	114,323
Net profit and total comprehensive income for the Period	1,869,399	481,898	861,417
Net profit per unit	0.036	0.030	0.043

WORLD

SHORT TAKES



Members of civil defence stand on rubble at a damaged site, in Tayr Debba, Lebanon. — Reuters

EU CONDEMNS ISRAELI STRIKES IN SOUTHERN LEBANON

BRUSSELS: The European Union on Saturday condemned Israeli strikes in southern Lebanon and asked it to respect a ceasefire with the group Hezbollah. Israeli strikes in Lebanon killed three people and wounded several more on Saturday, according to the Lebanese health ministry, with Israel announcing one of the attacks had hit arms smugglers from a group affiliated with Hezbollah. “The EU calls on Israel to cease all actions that violate resolution 1701 and the ceasefire agreement reached a year ago in November 2024,” the EU’s foreign affairs spokesman Anouar El Anouni stated. “At the same time, we urge all Lebanese actors and especially Hezbollah to refrain from any measures or responses that could further inflame the situation,” he added. “Focus by all parties must be on preserving the ceasefire and the progress achieved so far.” The Lebanese army has accused Israel of seeking to “undermine Lebanon’s stability” with Thursday’s strikes and to “prevent the completion of the army’s deployment” in line with the ceasefire. Lebanese President Joseph Aoun has condemned the Israeli strikes. — AFP

INDONESIA PROBES STUDENT AFTER 100 HURT IN BLASTS



Bomb squad officers stand at the entrance of a school in Jakarta. — AFP

JAKARTA: Indonesian authorities said they were investigating a student over their alleged involvement in explosions that wounded nearly 100 people at a school in the capital Jakarta. The blasts hit a school mosque in North Jakarta just as people were gathering for Friday prayers, sparking panic among worshippers. The national police chief said investigators had gathered “several pieces of evidence” as part of their probe. “There’s writing, and there is also evidence of powder that could potentially have caused an explosion,” Listyo Sigit Prabowo said. Authorities so far have identified one suspect, a student who was wounded in the explosions, but Listyo did not rule out the involvement of others. Investigators are examining the suspect’s family and social media, the police chief added. Ninety-six people were wounded in the incident, Listyo said, revising the police’s earlier casualty figure of 54. Twenty-nine victims remain hospitalised including at least two in intensive care, he said. Mayndra Eka Wardhana, spokesman for the police unit Densus 88, said that investigators had searched the suspect’s home. — AFP

AFGHANISTAN, PAKISTAN CEASEFIRE TO HOLD, DESPITE TALKS FAILING

KABUL: Afghanistan’s Taliban government said that its ceasefire with Pakistan would remain even though their latest talks failed, blaming Islamabad’s “irresponsible and uncooperative” approach. The two sides met in Turkiye to finalise a truce agreed on October 19 in Qatar, following deadly clashes between the South Asian neighbours. Both have remained tight-lipped on the content of the discussions, which are known only to have addressed long-standing security

issues. “During the discussions, the Pakistani side attempted to shift all responsibility for its security to the Afghan government, while showing no willingness to take responsibility for either Afghanistan’s security or its own,” Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid wrote on social media. “The irresponsible and uncooperative attitude of the Pakistani delegation has not yielded any results,” he said. At a news conference later on, Mujahid stressed that the ceasefire

“will hold”. “There is no issue with the ceasefire previously agreed upon with Pakistan, it will hold,” he said. Pakistan’s Information Minister Attaullah Tarar had previously hinted that negotiations in Turkiye were falling through, saying that the onus lay on Afghanistan to fulfil pledges to clamp down on terrorism, “which so far they have failed”. “Pakistan shall continue to exercise all options necessary to safeguard the security of its people and its sovereignty,” he wrote. — AFP

Russia hits several key Ukraine energy facilities

RUSSIA Launched a barrage of drones and missiles in overnight attacks on Ukraine on Saturday, killing at least three people and damaging large energy infrastructure facilities in three regions, Ukrainian officials said. President Volodymyr Zelensky said Russia had launched more than 450 drones and 45 missiles. Two people were killed and 12 were wounded in the city of Dnipro when a drone hit an apartment building. One person was killed in the Kharkiv region, regional officials said. Energy facilities in the Kyiv, Poltava and Kharkiv regions were damaged, Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko said.

Zelensky said the strikes showed that sanctions pressure should be intensified. “... for every Moscow strike on energy infrastructure — aimed at harming ordinary people before winter — there must be a sanctions response targeting all Russian energy, with no exceptions,” he said on the Telegram app. Since the start of its full-scale assault on Ukraine almost four years ago, Russia has made a point of attacking the power sector as the need for heating grows. This autumn, it has attacked gas facilities nine times in the space of two months, according to the state energy firm Naftogaz. Moscow’s Defence Ministry said it had launched “a massive strike with high-precision long-range air, ground and sea-based weapons” on weapon production and energy facilities in response to Kyiv’s strikes on Russia. Russia also said its forces



Rescuers work at the site of buildings hit during the Russian drone strike, in Dnipro. — Reuters

Moscow’s Defence Ministry said it had launched “a massive strike with high-precision long-range air, ground and sea-based weapons” on weapon production and energy facilities in response to Kyiv’s strikes on Russia

continued to advance in grinding battles around the key towns of Pokrovsk and Kupiansk, and had captured a tiny village in eastern Ukraine. Ukraine regularly sends its drones to strike oil facilities inside Russia. As diplomatic efforts to stop the war have faltered, Kyiv is trying to reduce Moscow’s ability to finance its war. The Ukrainian air force said 406 Russian drones and nine missiles had been shot down, and 26 Russian missiles and 52 drones had hit 25 sites. Svyrydenko said the government and energy companies were working to restore damaged electricity, water and heating provision. In the central Poltava region, two cities - Kremenchuk with a population of about 200,000 people and Horishni Plavni with some 50,000 residents - lost most of their electricity and were using

generators to provide water, city officials said. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Friday appointed a new commander responsible for drone air defences, seen as a critical element in defending against the threat of Russian drones. The president’s website said Yuri Chervashenko had experience in helping create Ukraine’s first group of reaction forces of air defence mobile brigades. He also played a role in developing interceptor drones, which Zelensky and other officials have portrayed as a key part in countering intensive Russian drone assaults in the more than 3-1/2-year war. Zelensky said a meeting of Ukraine’s command set out several tasks for the new commander, including the development of interceptor drones and the introduction of new means to strengthen air defences. Ukraine’s top commander, Oleksandr Syrskyy, said in September that Ukraine was looking to improve performance by interceptor drones to create a “layered system” of defence against Russian drones. Separately, US President Donald Trump welcomed Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban to the White House on Friday for a discussion about Hungary’s reliance on Russian oil at a time when Trump has been working to wean nations off of it. Orban, a long-time Trump ally, arrived at the White House at midday on Friday for his first bilateral meeting with Trump since the Republican leader and former New York businessman returned to power in January. — Reuters



PHILIPPINES HALTS RESCUE AS HUGE NEW STORM NEARS

MANILA: Rescue work was suspended and preemptive evacuations began on Saturday as Typhoon Fung-wong bore down on the Philippines, days after another storm killed at least 204 people. Fung-wong, expected to be a “super typhoon” before making landfall, bears a huge footprint, with a radius that could cover “almost the entire country,” a government meteorologist said. “Apart from the strong winds, we can also expect heavy rains ... 200 millimetres (eight inches) or higher rainfall, which can cause widespread flooding, not just in low-lying areas,” meteorologist Benison Estareja told a press briefing Saturday. “It’s also possible that our major river basins will overflow.” As of 11 am, the typhoon was moving westward toward the Philippines’ main island of Luzon, with wind speeds of 140 kilometres per hour and gusts of 170 kph. In coastal Aurora province rescuers were going door to door encouraging residents to head for higher ground. — AFP

CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Tehran to restrict water in drought battle



Iran was laying plans to cut off water supplies periodically to Tehran’s 10-million-strong population as it battles its worst drought in many decades. Rainfall in the capital has this year been at its lowest level in a century, local officials say, and half of Iran’s provinces have not seen a drop fall in months. “This will help avoid waste even though it may cause inconvenience,” Iran’s Energy Minister Abbas Ali Abadi said. — AFP

FIERCE STORMS

Tornado kills 6, injures over 400 in Brazil



A tornado killed at least six people and injured more than 400 as it destroyed most of a town in southern Brazil, authorities said. The twister overturned cars and damaged homes in Rio Bonito do Iguacu, in Parana state. It killed six people and injured 432. Two others are missing but this number could rise. Winds in Rio Bonito do Iguacu reached between 180 and 250 kilometres per hour. — AFP

ONGOING CLASHES

Sudan army intercepts drone attacks



The Sudanese army intercepted a drone attack launched by the Rapid Support Forces on the city of El-Obeid, two days after the paramilitary group said it agreed to a US-backed truce proposal. “The air defence system today shot down a drone launched by the RSF group towards the city,” said a military source, who requested anonymity. El-Obeid sits on a key supply route linking the Sudanese capital Khartoum to Darfur. — AFP



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Limited disruptions as flight cuts begin at major airports

THE first wave of flight cancellations ordered by the Trump administration in response to the government shutdown hit airports across the United States on Friday, foreshadowing what could be wider disruptions in air travel if Congress does not reach a spending deal soon. Although airlines said they were able to limit the fallout, there was a growing sense of frustration among some travellers that a federal shutdown was to blame for hundreds of cancelled flights. By Friday afternoon, major airports serving Austin, Texas; Chicago; Dallas; Houston; Phoenix; San Francisco; and Washington, DC, also had flight delays ranging from 15 minutes to several hours that were caused at least partly by limited air traffic controller staffing.

Bryan Dick, who was at LaGuardia Airport in New York and trying to get home to Phoenix after his flight was cancelled, said he was used to bad weather causing disruptions, but not shutdowns in Washington.

He was able to book another flight home but was thinking about cancelling a work trip in December if the shutdown dragged on. “This one’s different because it’s sort of man-made,” said Dick, 44, an electrical engineer who had visited New York for a conference. “I think people in Congress need to do their jobs because a lot of people out here are living paycheck to paycheck.”

As of midday Friday, about 780 flights had been cancelled, or about 3% of the 25,000 scheduled for the day, according to

Cirium, an aviation data company. While the cuts were relatively limited, they will be more difficult to manage as the reductions rise. And if the shutdown lingers, travel around Thanksgiving, one of the busiest periods of the year, could be affected.

Starting on Friday, the Federal Aviation Administration required airlines to cut 4% of flights at 40 of the nation’s busiest airports, including those serving Atlanta, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York and other major cities.

The mandate will remain in place through Monday, rising to 6% on Tuesday, 8% on Thursday and 10% on Friday. The Trump administration has said the cuts are necessary to relieve pressure on air traffic controllers who have been working without pay since the shutdown, the longest in U.S. history, began October 1.

On Friday, Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy suggested that the reductions could reach 20% at some airports if the shutdown continued into the Thanksgiving travel period. By then, he said, there could be “more controllers who decide they can’t come to work and control the airspace, but instead have to take a second job.”

Major airlines said on Friday that most customers would not be affected by the cuts imposed so far and that travellers who wanted to change or cancel a flight for a refund could do so.

American Airlines said on Friday morning that of the 12,000 people whose flights had been cancelled, most had found some other accommodation within a few hours. On Friday, the vast majority of

While the cuts were relatively limited, they will be more difficult to manage as the reductions rise. And if the shutdown lingers, travel around Thanksgiving, one of the busiest periods of the year, could be affected

US routes still had some service, and the airlines appeared to be taking a surgical approach to the cancellations, which were concentrated among short flights, according to Cirium. About 1 in 5 of the cancellations on Friday affected flights within a state, mainly in California and Texas, it said.

While the nation’s busiest airports had the most cancelled flights, the cuts disproportionately affected some of the country’s smaller, regional airports. Waco Regional Airport in Texas had the steepest decline in service, a 66% drop, after American Airlines cancelled two of its three round-trip flights with Dallas Fort Worth International Airport.

American also cut one of two round-trip flights between Dallas and Wichita Falls Regional Airport in Texas, halving service at that small airport.

International flights were largely unaffected by the reductions. As of Friday morning, only 10 international flights were cancelled: four to Canada, three to Jamaica and one each to Germany, New Zealand and Switzerland. Concerns that the disruptions could worsen appeared to be prompting some travellers to look for other ways to get around.

One-way bookings for Hertz rental cars through the weekend spiked more than 20% in two days, a company spokesperson said. Bus company Megabus said that it had seen “a significant increase” in ticket sales beginning on Thursday “and that trend seems to be growing as we approach the weekend.”

New York prepares for potential Trump immigration crackdown

NEW YORK’S political and civic leaders have been quietly preparing for the possibility that President Donald Trump will follow through on these threats to deploy federal troops and immigration agents to the city. Their efforts took on added urgency on Wednesday morning after the mayoral win of Zohran Mamdani, a democratic socialist whom Trump has sought to elevate into his new political foil. The preparations — among activists, business leaders and Gov. Kathy Hochul’s office — have included private meetings to discuss lawsuits, the formation of rapid-response groups and multiple phone calls with the New Yorkers’ counterparts in Los Angeles, Chicago and Washington.

The backroom mobilisation comes at an especially fraught time in the city and is the first test of a key question: Will Trump try to turn New York, his hometown and a place where he retains property and political allies, into another urban battleground over federal power? Or could his deep ties to New York businesspeople and real estate developers help prevent, or at least curb, an aggressive federal incursion into the city’s affairs? Jackie Bray, one of Hochul’s top advisers, has led much of the state planning, peppering officials in other cities with questions to craft New York’s response. And leaders from New York City’s real estate and business sectors are planning to meet again next week, at Hochul’s request.

Kathryn S. Wylde, the CEO of the Partnership for New York City, which represents much of the city’s corporate leadership, said that she had spoken with her counterparts in San Francisco, where business executives



Protesters confront federal officers in the East Side neighbourhood of Chicago. — NYT file photo

persuaded Trump not to send in federal agents last month. “We certainly have taken note and discussed with San Francisco their successful strategy,” Wylde said. The planning efforts, parts of which were reported by Politico on Thursday, accelerated last month after a raid on Canal Street in lower Manhattan that led to nine arrests. The raid was supposed to include more than 100 agents but was scaled back at the last minute, according to three people familiar with its planning.

On Thursday, a Trump administration official said that the president was invested in New York’s success but had no confidence in Mamdani’s ability to lead the city. Trump officials are exploring ways to curtail federal funding to the city and have begun discussing what an immigration enforcement operation in New York would look like, should Trump order

The preparations — among activists, business leaders and Gov. Kathy Hochul’s office — have included private meetings to discuss lawsuits, the formation of rapid-response groups and multiple phone calls with the New Yorkers’ counterparts in Los Angeles, Chicago and Washington

one, the official said. “President Trump cares deeply about the safety and security of all New Yorkers,” Abigail Jackson, a White House spokesperson, said in a statement. “This shouldn’t be controversial, even for a communist, though we won’t get ahead of the president on any potential announcements.”

In August, not long after federal agents descended on Los Angeles, Trump publicly mused about whether to send federal troops to Chicago or New York next. He settled on Chicago, where he launched a large immigration enforcement operation in September that has been defined by aggressive tactics and citizen pushback.

Bray quickly added Illinois to her call list. She quizzed officials there on how they confronted Trump’s federalisation of the National Guard; how the local police navigated a surge in federal agents on city

streets; and how they handled protests prompted by raids in neighbourhoods and workplaces. Bray said New York would probably follow the lead of other Democratic states and sue the Trump administration if it tried to deploy the National Guard there.

And Letitia James, the state attorney general, has been working on a legal strategy, a person familiar with the effort said. The focus, Bray said, was on preparing local and state police forces for the likelihood that federal agencies would cut off communication with them if deployed to New York.

Mayor Eric Adams, a Democrat, has warned against the deployment of the National Guard, saying that crime is under control and that it “would send the wrong message.” Jessica Tisch, the police commissioner, also spoke out in September: “As a lifelong New Yorker, I am revolted by the idea of the militarisation of our streets.” The city has provided more than \$123 million to legal service providers this year, hoping that they won’t be stretched if detained migrants are scouring for lawyers.

Along New York’s immigrant arteries, from the Chinese and Mexican enclaves of Sunset Park to the Latino precincts in Corona and Jackson Heights, neighbourhood groups have sprung into action. Smaller raids in those pockets by Immigration and Customs Enforcement have served as dry runs for what many immigrants in the country without legal permission anticipate could grow into bigger roundups. In October, as Trump encroached on other cities, more than 100 unions, community groups and left-wing organisations started a coalition, Hands Off NYC, to protest a similar federal intervention in New York.



LUIS FERRÉ-SADURNÍ

The writer is an immigration reporter for The New York Times



DANA RUBIN-STEIN

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OPINION

Why we should take some data with a pinch of salt



DR HAMED
AL SINAWI

The writer is a senior consultant psychiatrist at SQU Hospital

LAST week, a friend sent me a video of a psychiatrist citing a study that claimed 11 per cent of the population in Oman is depressed. My friend wanted to know if this was true and, if so, what might explain it. I responded that, before jumping to conclusions, the video should have provided more details about the study he referenced and its credibility.

Every day, we are bombarded with information designed to persuade, inform, or influence us. A news headline claims a shocking statistic or a social media post shares a “groundbreaking” study. This makes distinguishing truth from manipulation more challenging than ever.

Our brains are wired to accept convincing narratives and impressive-looking numbers without much scrutiny. We live in an age where anyone can present opinions as facts, where correlation gets mistaken for causation, and where a single study can launch a thousand misleading headlines.

In his book, “A Field Guide to Lies”, Daniel Levitin discusses how to spot misleading statistics and recognise false experts. He

explains that, to obtain reliable data, you need real people to collect the information. Since you can’t interview every single person in the country, you need to decide on a sample. That’s when the problem of sample bias comes in. Say you want to survey a town about people’s attitudes to boycotting certain brands. You head to a shopping mall and interview people across different ages, genders and nationalities. This, however, is still not representative, as you’ve already excluded people who are sick at home, mothers with small children who can’t easily get to the mall, and night workers sleeping during the day. You may think that doing door-to-door surveys will solve this, but if you knock during the day, you miss everyone working in town. Switch to nighttime, and you exclude night-shift workers. Every approach systematically leaves someone out.

Even if you somehow managed to reach a perfect cross-section of people, two more biases undermine your results.

The first is called participation bias, which means that not everyone you ask will agree to participate, and their reasons for declining can affect your data in predictable ways.

Most people’s brains are wired to accept convincing narratives and impressive-looking numbers without much scrutiny.

The volunteers aren’t random; they’re self-selecting based on who cares to engage with your particular topic.

The second is reporting bias, which is the gap between what people actually think and what they’re willing to tell the researcher. Some participants will exaggerate their income to appear more successful. People simply tell you what they think you want to hear.

Unfortunately, every sample includes some form of bias. The question isn’t whether bias exists, but what kind of bias you’re dealing with.

So, when you see survey results, ask yourself, who got left out of this sample? Who chose to participate and why? What might respondents have been reluctant to admit honestly? And when listening to experts, ask if they are presenting the data backed by research or just stating their opinion. If it’s just an opinion, how trustworthy are they?

Finally, when looking at information on a website, use sites that end in .edu, .gov, and .org as they tend to be more neutral compared to commercial websites with obvious agendas.

Global tech tensions overshadow Web Summit’s AI, robots

DAXIA ROJAS

Flashy AI, robotics and self-driving cars will be on show at the annual Web Summit in Lisbon from Monday, but global tensions over high-tech trade, competition and sovereignty will be weighing on the minds of entrepreneurs, investors and policymakers. Known as the ‘Davos for geeks’, the four-day event in the Portuguese capital is set to welcome over 70,000 visitors, including 2,500 startups and 1,000 investors.

With major global players racing to control the supply chains behind generative artificial intelligence, an appearance by chief executive of American chip developer Qualcomm Cristiano Amon will be a hot ticket.

His company recently announced a new range of AI chips designed to compete with sector heavyweight Nvidia and challenger AMD. Both firms’ high-end processors are subject to restrictions from Washington on their export to China on national security grounds.

Several leaders of other top AI players will also appear in Lisbon, including Microsoft President Brad Smith and Joleen Liang, co-founder of Chinese startup Squirrel AI, which is bringing the technology into classrooms.

One of Europe’s hottest tickets, Swedish startup Lovable, is sending boss Anton Osika to vaunt its technology that allows users to create apps and websites via a chatbot without coding experience.

British dictionary publisher Collins dubbed this “vibe coding” approach its word of the year for 2025.

Almost 30 per cent of investment in new sports technology went into AI firms in the first half of this year, investment bank Drake Star found in a study.

In Lisbon, Russian tennis star Maria Sharapova and France’s Caroline Garcia will be on stage talking about how AI can improve athletes’ performance in their discipline. Increasingly capable devices ranging from watches and rings able to monitor sleep, heart rate or body temperature mean that tech’s ability to detect initial signs of illness will be another hot topic.

American robotics chiefs in Lisbon will include Amazon Robotics boss Tye Brady and Robert Playter, head of the Boston Dynamics company known from viral videos of its dog-like quadrupeds.

Uber president Andrew Macdonald and Lyft’s chief David Risher will talk up schemes to fill the world’s streets with robotaxis.

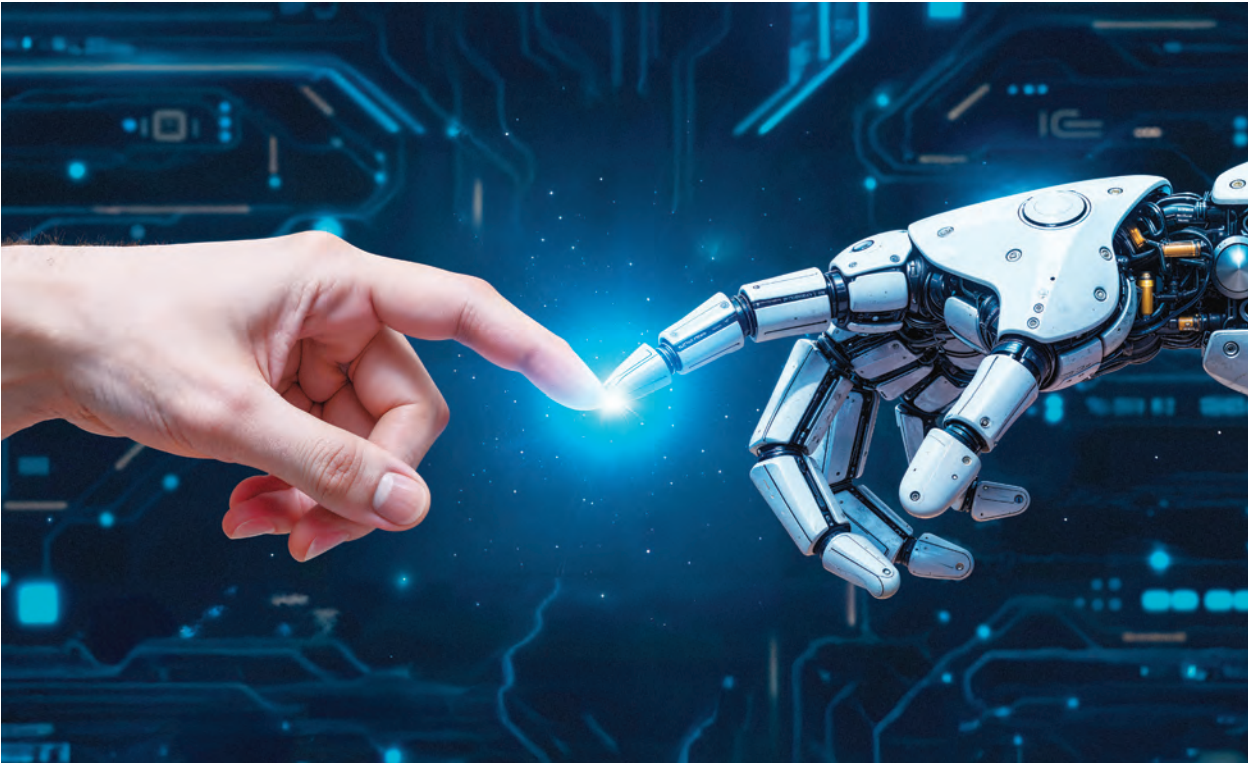
Uber has signed a partnership with chip developer Nvidia to upgrade tens of thousands of cars from different manufacturers with automation tech from 2027. — AFP

The coming fall of the AI empire...

GEOFFREY HINTON, often called the godfather of AI, has suggested that artificial intelligence may have achieved consciousness, a claim that implies the next great empire could be governed not by humans but by machines.

Yet no empire, however powerful, has ever lasted forever. If Hinton is right, the AI empire will follow the same journey of rise, dominance and decline that has marked every human empire before it. That mobile phone you hold in your hand may one day be nothing more than a relic of an AI Empire which has gone the way of all human empires. As a Briton, I have often questioned the right of any nation to rule another. When I visited Mumbai, I saw the grandeur of the British Empire carved into stone — the Law Courts, the Gateway of India — magnificent yet built on imperial sand. These relics stood as reminders of a time when one people believed their vision of civilisation was universal. Empires rarely see themselves as conquerors. They begin with conviction: the belief that they bring progress, order and enlightenment.

The British Empire was no exception. Its administrators built railways, courts and schools, convinced they were improving the world. But beneath that confidence lay arrogance. The assumption that one culture’s ideals were superior to all others. In Mumbai, that vision remains etched in stone, but the authority that sustained it has long vanished. The buildings endure, their beauty now tinged with irony. History is full of such illusions. The Roman Empire rose from a small city of soldiers and farmers who believed in law and discipline. They conquered with efficiency and ruled with conviction. For centuries, they held the known world together, but the same force that built their



Yet no empire, however powerful, has ever lasted forever.



KARIM
EASTERBROOK

The writer is a Former Cambridge School Principal and Author

empire brought about its end. Power became habit, ideals turned to ritual. Rome did not fall with a single blow. It simply lost faith in itself.

The British experience followed a similar rhythm, though expressed through trade rather than conquest. It was an empire of merchants and clerks, of maps and ledgers. The machinery of empire ran smoothly, the colonies obeyed, and the profits flowed. But the twentieth century exposed the fragility beneath the confidence. Two world wars drained Britain’s strength, and the colonies began to demand their own voices.

When India gained independence, it was both an ending and a revelation: empires never truly belong to those who build them. Every empire carries within it the seeds of its own destruction. Expansion and dominance breed arrogance, and arrogance blinds rulers to the resentment they create. The governed learn to imitate their

governors, to use their laws and their weapons against them. By the time an empire recognises its mistake, it is already too late. The structures remain — the Courts, the gates, the statues — but their meaning changes. They no longer proclaim power. They testify to its passing. Currently, empires are built not on territory but on technology, wealth and weapons.

Moreover, corporations and AI now shape the world more profoundly than armies ever did. Yet the same pattern persists: confidence, expansion, overreach and decline.

If AI truly becomes the next empire, one of data and code, it too will face the same fate. No empire, however intelligent, can escape the cycle of power and decay. The question is not whether a potential AI empire will fall, but how long it will take and when will those who are investing hundreds of billions into AI realise their mistake?

We’re only human... we’re supposed to make mistakes



RAY PETERSEN

The writer is a media consultant

RULING and steering a nation towards affluence and social responsibility is rarely easy. However, given the religious and cultural imperatives, and the tribal societal dynamics, it probably comes easier than in the West, where so called ‘civil liberties’ tend to offer many more questions than answers.

The predominance of the Islamic faith, at around 90 per cent of the roughly half a billion population across the entire region, should be seen as distinctly positive, but with its diversity of wholesome, family-based qualities. Certainly, and in no particular order, I understand, and can support, these defined characteristics of the Islamic faith.

Personally, I have always been overwhelmed by the level of unconditional kindness among Omanis, and I see no reason why this is not prevalent throughout the faith. Why? Because every discussion on the topic begins with the attribution of kindness being to that faith. Welcoming smiles, kindness, compassion and mercy, the ‘Rahmah’, are well tried and examined in the formal and informal literature, never more so than in the Hadith: “He who is not merciful to people, Allah will not be merciful to him.”

Another Hadith refers to ‘actions being

judged by intentions’, and this refers to the quality of sincerity, or ‘Ikhlas’, which always exudes from within. Ibn Al Qayyim wrote, “A person can have nothing more beneficial than sincerity towards his Lord in all affairs, along with sincerity of resolve. So, he should be sincere towards Him in his resolve and his actions.” In any culture, sincerity is coveted as it brings appearance and reality together, and it can only be aligned with truth, not falsehood.

Although truth (Sidq) and sincerity are very close, the former develops trust and integrity, and is a hallmark of all faiths. Within Islam, truth becomes righteousness, which leads to paradise, and is encouraged at every stage of life, from birth to the last days. We are only human though, aren’t we, and problems occur when we are treated untruthfully, and we tend to feel that it’s okay to respond in kind.

Humility, or ‘Tawadhu’, is, in my opinion, very much a stand-alone quality and is one that we are all capable of, but often find it difficult to consistently demonstrate, and I’ll always remember the C S Lewis quotation that, “Humility is not about thinking less of yourself – but thinking of yourself, less.” Lewis was a literary scholar, author and theologian, which means he was a scholar of religion, yet one of significant

Within Islam, truth becomes righteousness, which leads to paradise, and is encouraged at every stage of life, from birth to the last days

personal humility, “more than happy,” wrote A N Wilson, “worshipping with men of faith who came in shabby clothes and work boots and who sang all the verses to all the hymns,” than with the wealthy, this being a genuine demonstration of humility.

And finally, to my ‘Achilles heel’, which is my absence of patience (Sabr). I do reflect often, but tend to reflect in action, or, on the move. Patience, it appears, though, is most tested in times of bereavement, when we ask why (?) perpetually, of nobody in particular. Or maybe when we are made to wait, like in traffic jams or airport queues, and particularly when we are frustrated. Paul Cuelho said, we are at our most vulnerable when, having been patient enough to await the right moment, we then become frustrated by the outcome. The Islamic faith, however, recognises the benefits and value of patience... at least more than I do.

I hope I don’t sound like a preacher or an evangelist, but more like practical. None of those five qualities, at least to some extent, is difficult to engage with, and most of us don’t try hard enough. At the end of the day, yes, I know, the Sun goes down, and we should take comfort that progress rather than perfection is a really good perspective to have, after all... we’re only human.

WITH HINTS OF A DEMOCRATIC REVIVAL RISE

HUW GRIFFITH

In a week when the US Democratic Party finally showed some signs of life after a year of flatlining, one man proved he was already the picture of political health: Gavin Newsom.

The telegenic governor of California took another big step towards cementing his place as de facto leader of America’s opposition - and the presumed frontrunner in the race to be the party’s White House nominee in 2028.

California voted by a thumping majority to redraw congressional districts in Democrats’ favour, approving Newsom’s plan to counter similar gerrymandering that President Donald Trump ordered in Texas.

The move aimed to level the playing field for the 2026 midterm elections, when Democrats hope to wrestle control of the House of Representatives from a Republican majority they say has done nothing to check a burgeoning White House powergrab. Newsom wasted no time urging other Democratic-led states to follow suit.

“We need to see other states, their remarkable leaders that have been doing remarkable things, meet this moment head on as well,” he said moments after polls closed last Tuesday, as the two-to-one margin of victory became clear.

“We can de facto end Donald Trump’s presidency as we know it” should Democrats reclaim the House next year, Newsom added.

While there were big Democratic wins in New York’s mayoral contest and governor’s races in Virginia and New Jersey, Newsom’s gambit - and its potential national ramifications - was balm to a party that has floundered since being trounced in last year’s election. Getting the California redistricting vote off the ground in just a few months, then winning so handily — albeit in a Democratic-leaning state — left some party members impressed. “It shows that he can get stuff done,” Christale Spain, chairwoman of the South Carolina Democratic Party, told The New York Times. “Democrats want somebody to fight back. He’s pushing back and fighting back.”

Newsom, 58, is no party shoo-in for 2028, in part because he hails from a state Republicans love to knock as a bastion of progressive “wokeness.”

And several Democratic luminaries are believed to be in the presidential mix, including multiple fellow governors: Kentucky’s Andy Beshear, Michigan’s Gretchen Whitmer and JB Pritzker of Illinois, who, like Newsom, has punched back fiercely against Trump’s immigration crackdowns. But few politicians have undergone the kind of evolution that Newsom experienced in 2025.

Days after Trump was sworn into office in January, the governor welcomed him to California, where devastating wildfires had torched swathes of Los Angeles, killing dozens of people and leaving thousands more homeless.

While the two men’s enmity was never completely hidden, Newsom at least appeared to try a bipartisan hug that would keep the mercurial president involved in the costly recovery. — AFP

Why climate finance is not enough

WITH the United Nations Climate Conference (COP30) in Belém, Brazil, approaching, it is clear that the world’s widely shared commitment to a just energy transition is falling by the wayside. In the year since governments signed on to the agreement at COP29 to scale up climate finance – with a goal of mobilising \$1.3 trillion annually by 2035 – wealthy countries have been retreating from their financial pledges. Worse, these signs of bad faith are coming just as the costs of climate adaptation and decarbonisation in developing countries are mounting.

If the Global North is no longer willing to meet its funding promises, as now seems certain, it can still demonstrate good faith, nonetheless, through another form of solidarity: sharing the knowledge, technology, and intellectual property that underpin the green transition. This is not an issue that can be deferred. The shift to a green economy is already reproducing the same asymmetries that have long defined global trade. Instead of fostering inclusive development, climate policy is increasingly being shaped by protectionist measures and IP regimes that entrench technological monopolies in the Global North. For example, the European Union’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism may be billed as a safeguard against carbon leakage; but it also illustrates how climate policy can be used to justify protectionist trade measures.

Moreover, China’s recent complaint against India for its electric-vehicle and battery subsidies shows how green industrial policies are increasingly becoming grounds for trade disputes. Together, these developments signal a growing tension between climate goals and World Trade Organisation rules. Could measures to address climate change soon become a new impetus for economic exclusion?

At the heart of this issue lies a stark imbalance: larger powers like China, the United States, and the EU are producing high-value green technologies, while most developing



The shift to a green economy is already reproducing the same asymmetries that have long defined global trade.



LAURA CARVALHO

The writer is Director of Economic and Climate Prosperity at the Open Society Foundations and Associate Professor of Economics at the University of São Paulo

countries are stuck exporting low-value green commodities – primarily critical minerals. This mirrors the colonial-era division of labour, whereby the Global South supplied raw materials, and the North supplied innovation, monopolised production, and reaped the largest profits.

Data from the World Intellectual Property Organisation underscore the depth of this divide. Green patents (relating to renewable energy, energy efficiency, and climate adaptation) are overwhelmingly concentrated in a handful of countries, such as China, the US, Japan, and Germany. Between 2000 and 2024, the top ten economies accounted for nearly 90 per cent of international patent filings in solar and wind technologies. Brazil, despite ranking sixth globally in installed wind capacity, contributed only 0.4 per cent of global wind patents. For solar, its share was a mere 0.19 per cent. This technological concentration is not accidental. It is the result of a global IP regime that privileges monopoly profits over public goods. Efforts to foster more global coordination, including through the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement, have failed to address the fundamental problem.

Without access to affordable technologies, the Global South cannot fully participate in the climate transition. Worse, the current system risks locking developing countries into a new form of dependency, supplying the minerals for batteries and solar panels but lacking the means to produce them.

Climate finance is not sufficient to break this cycle. Instead, technology transfers and reforms to the global IP regime must be at the centre of climate negotiations. While the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris climate agreement do acknowledge this, little progress has been made.

Fortunately, there is a precedent for the necessary changes. Back in the 2000s, Brazil played a pivotal role in categorising access to HIV/Aids medicines as a public good, rather than as a commodity governed solely by IP rights. This shift was driven by a combination of legal, political, and civil-society actions that challenged the global pharmaceutical patent regime and put public health first.

As the Nobel laureate economist Joseph Stiglitz has argued, such mechanisms are essential to correct market failures and ensure equitable access to innovation. That is why the International Court of Justice, in its recent advisory opinion on climate change, underscored the obligation of all states to cooperate – beyond the provision of finance – on the development and diffusion of green technologies, including by sharing knowledge and engaging in technology transfers.

The Technology Implementation Programme that was agreed at COP28 offers a means to foster such cooperation. Under Brazil’s leadership at COP30, TIP can become a platform for strengthening national innovation systems, enabling countries to adapt technologies to local contexts and build capacity for climate solutions. The idea is to use a mix of public and private money to support trial projects, and then to scale those that prove effective.

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SPORTS

SHORT TAKES



This local camp comes just before the team's departure to Thailand on Monday evening for an external training camp.

U-17 BEGIN LOCAL TRAINING CAMP

SPORT REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 8

The Oman national under-17 football team resumed training on Saturday as part of a short local camp currently being held in Muscat Governorate. The camp runs until Monday, serving as part of the team's final preparations for participation in the AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers, scheduled to kick off at the end of November.

This local camp comes just before the team's departure to Thailand on Monday evening for an external training camp, during which Oman will play two friendly matches — the first against Thailand on November 13, and the second against Kuwait on November 16. After completing the Thailand camp, the team will travel to Myanmar on November 20 to begin final preparations for the qualifiers, where they will play their opening match against Syria on November 24, followed by fixtures against Nepal, Myanmar and Afghanistan later in the month.

The team's technical staff, led by head coach Ahmed bin Salem Bait Said, announced a 24-player squad for the current camp:

Abdullah bin Khalifa al Saadi, Bashar bin Badr al Shamsi, Mohammed bin Salim al Jabri, Nimar bin Talal al Amri, Awadh bin Khamis al Saadi, Mohammed bin Majid al Balushi (Al Amarat Club), Mubarak bin Yousuf al Amri, Turki bin Ghassan al Ghassani, Muath bin Younis al Hinai, Abdullah bin Khalid al Zaabi, Nizar bin Mohammed al Silmi (Al Seeb Club), Bashar bin Abdullah al Ghafri (Bahla Club), Al Hassan bin Ahmed Bahhaj (Al Ittihad Club), Omar bin Khalfan al Maani (Majees Club), Saleh bin Fakhri al Balushi (Al Nasr Club), Salim bin Basim al Rawahi (Samayil Club), Saad bin Mohammed al Maamari (Dibba Club), Ahmed bin Jameel al Yahmadi, Mohammed bin Ahmed al Hashemi, Turki bin Mohammed al Ruzaiqi, Abdullah bin Raed al Balushi (Al Musannah Club), Al Azhar bin Khamis al Saadi (Al Surwaiq Club), Mishaal bin Said al Raqqadi (Bausher Club), and Mohammed bin Jumaa al Uraini (Al Bashayer Club).



Ahmed bin Salem Bait Said, head coach announced a 24-player squad for the current camp.

Eyad crowned U-18 title, Areen shines in girls' group

SPORT REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 8

THE OMAN Tennis Association (OTA) concluded its second monthly tennis tournament for the current sports season, which ran for an entire week at the tennis courts of Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Bausher. The event saw wide participation from 70 male and female players across various age groups: under 18, under 14, under 12, under 10, and under 9. This tournament marked the second in the Association's ongoing series for the season, with the final monthly championship scheduled to take place from November 17 for seven consecutive days.

A COMPETITIVE AND EXITING FINAL

The tournament's final day featured the U-18 boys' final between Abdulrahman al Rahbi and Ahmed Eyad, held under the auspices of Faisal bin Mohammed al Yousef, member of the Oman Tennis Association's Board of Directors, and in the presence of players' families and participants.

Ahmed Eyad delivered a dominant performance, clinching an impressive 9-1 victory, showcasing his superior skills and experience to claim the title deservedly. The match highlighted the technical progress and growing maturity of Oman's young tennis players.

HONOURING THE WINNERS AND RECOGNISING TALENT

At the closing ceremony, the patron of the event honoured the top finishers, praising the high technical level and the wide participation from different age categories. He emphasised that these monthly tournaments serve as important preparation stages for national team players and a valuable opportunity for resident players in Oman to gain competitive experience.

FINAL RESULTS BOYS U-18: 1st place – Ahmed Eyad; 2nd place Abdulrahman al



The event saw wide participation from 70 male and female players across various age groups.

Rahbi (National Team). Girls U-18, the 1st place snatch by Areen al Azkawi (National Team); 2nd place Talia al Busaidy (National Team). Boys U-14 1st place snatch by Richard; 2nd place Abdulrahman al Rahbi. Girls U-14: 1st place Areen al Azkawi; 2nd place – Talia al Busaidy. In the U-12: 1st place – Kavin Raj; 2nd place Imad al Rahbi. In the Boys U-10: 1st place, Rudansh Agarwal; 2nd place, Ahdhvik Bhat. Girls U-10: 1st place Jocelyn; 2nd place Turfa Ali Hussein. Mixed U-9: 1st place, Savana Makourash; 2nd place, Said al Marjabi; 3rd place, Mohannad al Najjar; 4th place, Aditva.

VOICES FROM THE TOURNAMENT

Coach Nabeel Al Doub expressed his delight with the overall level displayed by the players, congratulating the winners for their strong performances. He affirmed that these monthly tournaments have proven their value in developing young talents and enhancing players' readiness for international competitions, noting the visible improvement from one tournament to another due to good

preparation and growing participation.

National team player Abdulrahman al Rahbi praised the tournament's organisation and technical quality, describing it as an ideal platform for player interaction and experience exchange, adding that the Association's consistent efforts to organise regular tournaments are significantly helping the sport's development in Oman.

Meanwhile, Areen al Azkawi, also a national team player, expressed her happiness after winning first place, commending the high level of competition and organisation. She noted that such monthly tournaments enhance the skills and confidence of national players ahead of international competitions, and she appreciated the Oman Tennis Association and its technical staff for their continuous efforts to nurture and develop local talent.

The tournament concluded amid a vibrant, family-friendly atmosphere, reflecting the Oman Tennis Association's success in promoting youth engagement and competitive excellence in the sport across the Sultanate of Oman.

Queiroz announces squad for domestic camp

ADIL AL BALUSHI
MUSCAT, NOV 8

Oman national football team head coach Carlos Queiroz announced a 25-member squad for the domestic training camp in Muscat, which began on Saturday and will run until November 23. The camp will form a crucial part of the Red Warriors' preparations for the Fifa Arab Cup Qatar 2025 pre-qualifier match against Somalia, scheduled to take place on November 26. The winner of the qualifier will advance to the group stage of the prestigious Arab competition, set to be held in Doha from December 1 to 18.

The new squad marked the return of striker Al Mundher al Alawi, who rejoined the team after an absence in the recent Fifa World Cup 2026 Asian Qualifiers playoff stage. His comeback is expected to strengthen Oman's attacking options as Queiroz continues to shape the team's final lineup prior Fifa Arab Cup.

Among the goalkeepers, Queiroz retained Ibrahim al Mukhaini, Fayez al Rushaidi, and Bilal al Balushi, while introducing Ibrahim al Rajhi



Oman national football team.

from Al Nasr, who received his first call-up under the Portuguese coach to enhance competition in the goalkeeping department. The squad also included several promising young talents who have impressed in domestic competitions. Rising star Yousef al Malki of Al Shabab, Khalid al Ghatrifi of Al Nasr, and Said al Alawi from Al Nahda received the confidence of Queiroz to join the team's squad for this camp.

As this training period does not fall within official Fifa international match days,

several of Oman's overseas professionals were not called up. These include Mohsin al Ghassani of Thailand's Bangkok United, as well as Khalid al Buraiki and Abdulrahman al Mushaifri from Czech side SK Artiis Brno, who continued to face visa-related travel delays following the recent World Cup qualifiers.

Meanwhile, Hatim al Rousdi from Al Shabab were not included despite their strong showings in the AFC Challenge League, while Ahmed al Kaabi (Al Nahda) missed out due

to injury. Sultan bin Bader al Marzooq has joined the Oman Olympic team setup, and Mulhim al Sunaidy (Al Nasr) was also left out of the current squad. Also, Al Harthy al Mukhaini of Oman Club did not earn his maiden senior team selection yet despite his standout performances in the Jindal League.

The Red Warriors will play two friendly matches during the camp against Sudan on November 14 and Côte d'Ivoire on November 18 to fine-tune their form and readiness ahead of the decisive qualifier against Somalia.

SQUAD:

Ibrahim al Mukhaini, Fayez al Rushaidi, Bilal al Balushi, Ibrahim al Rajhi, Musab al Shaqsi, Khalid al Ghatrifi, Yousef al Malki, Ahmed al Mushaifri, Said al Alawi, Amjad al Harthy, Thani al Rushaidi, Ghanim al Habshi, Ali al Busaidy, Musab al Maamari, Ahed al Mashakheyi, Harib al Saadi, Jameel al Yahmadi, Abdullah Fawaz, Zaher al Ghhari, Al Mundher al Alawi, Nasser al Rawahi, Salah al Yahyaei, Mohammed al Ghafri and Essam al Subhi.

SHORTTAKES



Al Bashayer maintained their dominance with accurate shooting from beyond the arc and solid defence.

AL BASHAYER
DEFEAT SALALAH IN
BASKETBALL LEAGUE

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, NOV 8

Al Bashayer Club opened its 2025–2026 General Basketball League campaign with a commanding 85–26 victory over Salalah Club in the match held yesterday evening at the secondary hall of Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex in Bausher.

The game was completely dominated by Al Bashayer, who imposed their rhythm on the court from the very beginning thanks to the team's strong chemistry, disciplined defence, and swift transitions between defence and attack. With precise passing and quick collective movements, Al Bashayer managed to control the game in all four quarters. The scoring lead came from Hadeed Bait Bakhit, Ahmed al Halhuli, Noah al Mahrrouqi, Abdulridha al Battashi, Al Huwari al Awaisi, and Bassam al Busaidy, whose roles alternated between scoring and playmaking. Meanwhile, Salalah's players, led by Mishal Kafkaf and Qaiser al Balushi, tried to keep pace with the match's intensity, but the difference in experience and fitness was evident in favour of Al Bashayer.

The match began at a fast pace with Al Bashayer taking the initiative, opening the scoring with back-to-back three-pointers from Abdulridha al Battashi and al Huwari al Awaisi to take a six-point lead. Salalah responded with two points from Qaiser al Balushi under the basket after a fine assist from Mishal Kafkaf, but Al Bashayer continued their offensive momentum to close the first quarter ahead 18–7.

In the second quarter, Al Bashayer maintained their dominance with accurate shooting from beyond the arc and solid defence, limiting Salalah to just four points while adding 16 themselves to end the first half 34–11.

The third quarter saw Al Bashayer display their best form of the game, relying on fast breaks and wing penetrations to score 28 points compared to only three for Salalah, widening the gap significantly to finish the quarter 62–14.

In the fourth quarter, Salalah attempted to improve their performance and gradually get back into the game through individual efforts, but Al Bashayer's organised defence prevented any real comeback. The players continued scoring confidently until the final whistle, sealing a deserved victory for Al Bashayer 85–26 and proving their readiness to compete strongly this season.



Sur players celebrate after scoring a goal against Al Rustaq.

Saham, Al Nasr and Sur
win in Jindal league

AHMED AL KAABI
MUSCAT, NOV 8

SAHAM STOLE the spotlight and deepened Dhofar's struggles with a well-deserved 3–1 victory in their match at Sohar Sports Complex, as part of Round 6 of the Jindal Football League.

Saham started strong, taking the lead early in the 6th minute when defender Fahad al Hajri accidentally sent a cross from Ali al Hashmi into his own net.

In the 42nd minute, Dhofar equalised through Mutaz Saleh Abdurabuh, who successfully converted a penalty kick, ending the first half in a 1–1 draw despite multiple Saham attempts led by Mohsen Jowhar.

In the second half, Saham maintained its dominance with organised play and high pressing, and their foreign striker, Owen Atikor Romokik netted the second goal in the 52nd minute. Substitute Nooh al Araimi sealed the win with a third goal in stoppage time (90+3).

The match was packed with drama as three players were sent off: Firas al Soori

from Dhofar received a red card first, followed by Nooh al Araimi (after scoring) and Abdulmaeen al Marzouqi from Saham, leaving Saham with nine players against ten.

Despite the numerical disadvantage, Saham remained composed until the final whistle, claiming a valuable win that lifted them to 10 points in 5th place, while Dhofar slipped to 11th with 5 points.

Saham's goalkeeper Hassan bin Rashid al Buraiki also sustained an injury during the match but managed to continue after treatment.

AL NASR STAGE A THRILLING COMEBACK TO DEFEAT IBRI 4-1

At Al Saada Sports Complex, Al Nasr turned the tables on Ibri, coming from behind to secure a 4–1 victory in another exciting Round 6 clash.

Ibri took the lead in the 28th minute through Hudhaifa al Balushi, who capitalised on a fast counterattack and fired a powerful shot past goalkeeper Ibrahim al Rajhi. Despite several attempts, including a close strike from Fahad Adel in the 40th minute, Al Nasr ended the first half trailing 0–1.

With the start of the second half, Al Nasr adopted an attacking approach, and Mulhim

al Sunaidy equalised in the 49th minute with a long-range effort before scoring again in the 53rd minute following a precise pass inside the box.

Ibri's foreign player Bissan Jakus missed a golden chance to equalise in the 63rd minute with a header that was brilliantly saved by Al Rajhi. As Al Nasr continued pressing, substitute Jassim al Noobi added the third goal in stoppage time (90+1), while al Sunaidy completed his hat-trick in the final minute to seal a comprehensive win.

This result lifted Al Nasr to 10 points and 4th place, while Ibri remained in 13th place with no points.

SUR TRIUMPH 5-1 OVER AL RUSTAQ

At Sur Sports Complex, Sur recorded a commanding 5–1 victory over Rustaq, showcasing an impressive attacking display.

Goals for Sur came from Mohammed al Mukhaini, Yousuf al Mukhaini, Sameh al Hasani, and two goals by Humaid al Wuhaibi, while Mohammed al Adawi netted Al Rustaq's lone goal.

The win lifted Sur to 4 points in 12th place, while Al Rustaq remained at the bottom of the standings with zero-points, extending their poor run of results in the league.

Thrilling competition marks the 4th race at Al Rahba racecourse

RIYADH AL BALUSHI
BARKA, NOV 8

The fourth horse race of the season took place on Saturday, November 8, at the Al Rahba racecourse in Barka, organised by the Oman Horse Racing Club under the supervision of the Oman Equestrian and Racing Federation. The event attracted a large crowd of enthusiasts and featured an impressive lineup of top riders and elite horses.

The races began at Al Rahba Farm, consisting of eight rounds six for pure Arabian horses and two for thoroughbreds, the event was graced by the presence of Brigadier General Abdulrazzaq bin Abdulqadir al Shehouri, Chairman of the Oman Horse Racing Club, along with several officials and horse

owners. The competition was fierce and filled with excitement, highlighting the high skill levels of the participating jockeys and the growing quality of the stables across the Sultanate of Oman.

In the first race, the horse Al Dastoor claimed first place, ridden by Ahmed bin Salim al Siyabi and trained by Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al Balushi, followed by S K Khailan in second and Gwash Al Shahania in third.

The second race saw Amirial Amber clinch the top spot with Amer bin Ali al Rasbi as jockey and Yaqdhan bin Ali al Farsi as trainer, while Dahes finished second and Thayban third.

In the third race, Tarjuman emerged victorious with jockey Moanis bin Salim al Siyabi and trainer Mohammed bin Habib al Balushi, followed



The event concluded with the crowning of the winners amid a festive atmosphere, reaffirming Oman's steady progress and excellence in the field of horse racing.

by Al Muhtashim and Nibras.

“This win is a great motivation for our team. Tarjuman has shown remarkable development and consistency this season, we dedicate this victory to all who supported us and to the spirit of Omani horse racing that continues to inspire new generations.” Horse owner

Hilal bin Sultan al Jabri, owner of Tarjuman, expressed his delight. The fourth race title went to Light Beam with Abdulrahman bin Talib al Farsi in the saddle and Mohammed bin Salim al Rasbi as trainer, while Always on Fire and Octalgano followed in second and third respectively.

In the fifth race, the mare

Yasrah triumphed, ridden by Moanis bin Salim al Siyabi and trained by Mohammed bin Isa al Balushi, with Ruslan and Al Adaaj taking second and third.

The sixth race was dominated by the colt Al Eqab, guided by Ibrahim bin Khamis al Hinai and trained by Kahlan bin Mohammed al Balushi, while Aman came second and Lami'a third.

In the seventh race, I S Al Ameid secured the win for jockey Mohammed bin Mahmoud al Farsi and trainer Hassan bin Mohammed al Falahi, with Jameheen second and Rajeh Muscat third.

The grand finale the eighth and final race, also known as the Champions' Race witnessed a spectacular performance by Hareeb, ridden by Amer bin Ali al Rasbi and trained by Marwan

bin Darwish al Balushi, taking first place. Djalnoor and Mador finished second and third respectively. “Winning the Champions' Race means a lot, it reflects the hard work and harmony between the jockey and the entire team. We dedicate this victory to our supporters.” Trainer Marwan bin Darwish al Balushi expressed his joy said.

“The competition was intense, but the spirit of sportsmanship prevailed. It's a promising season with exceptional organisation and strong performances across all levels.” Jockey Anas bin Salim al Siyabi added:

The event concluded with the crowning of the winners amid a festive atmosphere, reaffirming Oman's steady progress and excellence in the field of horse racing.

SPORTS

SHORT TAKES



The delegation emphasised that this participation forms part of a long-term development plan aimed at elevating the performance level of Oman's swimmers.

AL KULIBI AND AL WAHAIBI CONCLUDE PARTICIPATION IN RIYADH

SPORT REPORTER
MUSCAT, NOV 8

Oman's national swimming duo, Mishal al Kulaibi and Mohammed al Wahaibi, concluded their participation in the swimming events of the 6th Islamic Solidarity Games, currently taking place in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The swimmers competed in the 50m Butterfly and 50m Freestyle heats took place at the Olympic Sports Complex on Saturday, among elite swimmers from across the Islamic world.

In the 50m Butterfly event, al Kulaibi claimed first place in his heat with a time of 26.75 seconds, surpassing Bahrain's Adnan Firas Abu Salem (26.89s). His compatriot, Mohammed al Wahaibi, came third in the same heat with 26.93s. However, the overall times from other heats were faster, preventing the Omani swimmers from qualifying for the next stage despite their close performance margins.

Later, in the 50m Freestyle at 11:05 a.m., Al Wahaibi delivered a strong performance, finishing second in his heat with a time of 25.80 seconds, just behind Ghana's Sean Ferno Debokroma (25.32s). Mauritania's Kamel Daoua came third (26.02s). Despite Al Wahaibi's impressive swim, the aggregate results from other heats placed him outside the qualifying ranks.

The Omani swimmers will return to action on Monday for the 100m Freestyle event. The coaching staff praised their determination and noted the significant improvement shown while competing against top athletes from Asia and Africa. The delegation emphasised that this participation forms part of a long-term development plan aimed at elevating the performance level of Oman's swimmers.

GRAND OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 6TH ISLAMIC SOLIDARITY GAMES IN RIYADH
Royal Highness Prince Faisal bin Bandar bin Abdulaziz al Saud, Governor of Riyadh Region, officially inaugurated the 6th Islamic Solidarity Games on Friday night. The spectacular opening ceremony, held at the Al Janadriyah Camel Field, featured dazzling artistic and cultural performances celebrating Saudi Arabia's rich heritage under the theme "Welcome to Your Homeland." The event saw the participation of 57 Islamic nations, symbolising unity and brotherhood across the Muslim world.



Track action in Sakhir began with free practice on Thursday, 6th November, where the squad posted the fourth quickest time in session one before ending a fraction outside the top 10 in the second period.

Ninth place start for Al Harthy in Bahrain finale

FIA WORLD Endurance Championship front-runner Ahmad al Harthy will begin today's final race of the season, the Bapco Energies 8 Hours of Bahrain, from ninth on the grid as he and BMW M4 LMGT3 team-mates Valentino Rossi and Kelvin van der Linde chase their third podium result of 2025.

Oman's Al Harthy, delighted to be back racing in the Middle East this weekend for the first time since the FIA WEC curtain-raiser in Qatar in February, had the duty of qualifying the No.46 Team WRT car in the main qualifying session on Friday, 7th November, and produced an excellent showing.

After lapping Bahrain International Circuit with the seventh best time in the opening 12-minute run, just half a second away from the top of the timesheets, the OQ Group, Sohar International, Omantel, Oman LNG, BMW Oman, Oman Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth (MoCSY), and Experience Oman backed racer progressed the car to Hyperpole where team-mate Rossi ended that session ninth fastest.

Track action in Sakhir began with free practice on Thursday, 6th November, where the squad posted the fourth quickest time in session one before ending a fraction outside the top 10 in the second period. Making final adjustments to race set-up in free practice three on Friday morning, the team was 12th in session ahead of the all-important qualifying.

Al Harthy strapped himself into the car for the first 12-minute run and built his speed over the first couple of laps before pumping in his first true flyer, a time of 2m03.893 seconds, which put him second fastest on the timesheets briefly before slipping down the order as times tumbled.

On his next lap the Omani bettered his previous time with a lap of 2m03.534 seconds to move into fifth position, less than a couple of tenths of a second shy of the top two. With no improvement possible the next time around, Al Harthy instead pitted into the final minute and ultimately ended with the seventh fastest time – duly qualifying the No.46 car for the decisive Hyperpole.

Rossi took the subsequent session and produced a time of 2m09.899 seconds with his first effort, before improving to a lap of 2m03.067 seconds the next time around which placed him fourth. Edged back to ninth with just a couple of minutes to go, the Italian wasn't able to improve further and so qualified the BMW at the head of row five of the grid for the last race of the season.

"I'm really happy with the performance we had in qualifying, to put the car into Hyperpole was the objective and we achieved that. My qualifying was great and Vale did a great job, it's always very competitive in Hyperpole so to start P9 for

an eight-hour race is a good way to start. We know that anything can happen in such a long race, we're looking at following our own strategy and focusing on our own performance more than anything else. Hopefully we can end the year with a good race." Al Harthy said.

The final race of the FIA World Endurance Championship, the Bapco Energies 8 Hours of Bahrain, began On Saturday at 14.00 local time. Live timing and coverage will be available at [www.fiawec.com](#)

2025 FIA WEC LMGT3 DRIVER STANDINGS (AFTER RD7):

- 1st Riccardo Pera / Richard Lietz / Ryan Hardwick, 105pts
- 2nd Alessio Rovera / Francois Heriau / Simon Mann, 94pts
- 3rd Charlie Eastwood / Rui Andrade / Tom van Rompuy, 81pts
- 8th Ahmad al Harthy / Valentino Rossi / Kelvin van der Linde, 52pts

2025 FIA WEC LMGT3 Team Standings (after Rd7):

- 1st Manthey 1st Phorm (Porsche 911 GT3 R LMGT3), 105pts
- 2nd Vista AF Corse (Ferrari 296 LMGT3), 94pts
- 3rd TF Sport (Corvette Z06 LMGT3.R), 81pts
- 8th Team WRT (BMW M4 LMGT3), 52pts

Norris extends title lead in Sao Paulo GP sprint after Piastri spin

SAO PAULO: Lando Norris extended his lead in the drivers' world championship to nine points on Saturday when, after his McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri crashed out, he won the sprint race at the Sao Paulo Grand Prix.

His victory by eight-tenths of a second ahead of Mercedes' teenage Italian rookie Kimi Antonelli earned him eight points to lift him to 365 points in the title race ahead of Piastri on 356 and four-time champion Max Verstappen of Red Bull, who finished fourth, on 326.

Norris was 0.845 seconds ahead of a feisty Antonelli at the chequered flag with George Russell third in the second Mercedes ahead of Verstappen, Charles Leclerc of Ferrari and Aston Martin's Fernando

Alonso.

Piastri lost control and hit the barriers on lap six of the 24-lap race at a slippery Interlagos circuit, damaging his car and his title hopes after losing his leadership of the championship two weeks ago in Mexico.

The race in mixed conditions ended with another spectacular accident when local hero Gabriel Bortoleto hit the barriers heavily twice in his Sauber at the Senna Esses on the final lap, losing both front and rear wings. He was unhurt.

"It was tough," said Norris.

"So it is more rewarding to win like this, especially with Kimi there not making my life easy. I had to push and it was a bit sketchy and a struggle at the end on the soft tyres.



Winner McLaren's British driver Lando Norris (C), second-placed Mercedes' Italian driver Kimi Antonelli (L) and third-placed Mercedes' British driver George Russell (R) pose for a photo after the sprint of the Sao Paulo Formula One Grand Prix. — AFP

We have some homework to do before qualifying."

Antonelli said: "It was a fun race in very trick conditions and we tried to keep the pressure on Lando, but just came up short."

After heavy rain earlier, the race began in drying air with temperatures of 23 (air) and 26 (track) and a keen gusty wind, causing a mixture of soft and medium tyres to be selected in the treacherous conditions.

Norris made a clean start but then Piastri, running third, took the kerb at turn three and went spinning off at the Curva do Sol, his trajectory taking Sauber's Nico Hulkenberg and Alpine's Franco Colapinto with him as they followed his line five laps later.

A safety car was deployed immediately, quickly followed by a red flag on lap eight.

PUT THAT BEHIND ME
Hulkenberg succeeded in guiding his damaged car back to the pits for repairs - a new front and rear wing - and was permitted to rejoin the fray once the barriers were repaired.

But for Piastri it was not only a second consecutive pointless sprint race, but also a costly setback to his title challenge on a day when he hoped to restrict Norris's advantage.

After a 24-minute hiatus, during which several drivers including Norris, on softs, changed tyres, the race resumed with a rolling start for lap nine. Norris, again, advanced with aplomb. — AFP

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SHORTTAKES



144 lease agreements have been signed covering industrial, service and commercial sectors.

AL MAZUNAH FREE ZONE INVESTMENTS TOP RO 140 MILLION

AL MAZUNAH: The Al Mazunah Free Zone has continued to strengthen its position as a key gateway for trade and investment, with cumulative investments exceeding RO 140 million by the end of October 2025. This year alone, the zone attracted 13 new projects worth a total of RO 420,000.

Engineer Ahmed bin Khamis al Kasbi, Director General of the Al Mazunah Free Zone, said that 144 lease agreements have been signed covering industrial, service and commercial sectors. The management is prioritising industrial investments to ensure the sustainability and diversification of economic activity.

Al Kasbi revealed that preparations are underway to begin the trial operation of the animal quarantine facility in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources during the fourth quarter of this year. Meanwhile, the desalination plant project is 80 per cent complete and expected to start operations before year-end, further enhancing infrastructure in the zone.

He noted that several lease contracts were cancelled this year due to non-compliance with implementation schedules. However, trade activity continues to rise, with a 21.7 per cent increase in imports and exports during the first three quarters of 2025 compared to last year. The total weight of goods exceeded 228,500 tonnes, while vehicle movement surged 40 per cent, reaching 5,765 vehicles by the end of October. — ONA

Oman honours top firms to boost competitiveness

THE Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP), in cooperation with the Ministry of Labour, the Royal Oman Police and the Tax Authority, continues to implement the “Outstanding Companies” initiative — a national programme that celebrates high-performing private enterprises while fostering competitiveness, innovation and sustainable growth.

Designed to strengthen the private sector’s contribution to Oman Vision 2040, the initiative highlights companies that demonstrate excellence in governance, financial performance and institutional management.

It aims to motivate firms to adopt global best practices, enhance productivity and play a stronger role in economic diversification and job creation.

Mubarak bin Mohammed al Dohani, Director General of Planning at MoCIIP and Head of the Supervisory Team for Distinguished Companies, said the initiative reflects the Ministry’s vision of building a resilient and competitive private sector driven by governance, innovation and sustainability.

“The companies recognised under this initiative have shown strong potential for growth, readiness to expand and an ability to adapt to global market changes. Beyond recognition, the initiative seeks to inspire all companies



5,109 companies have so far been classified as “distinguished” out of a total of 352,622 registered firms.

to enhance their efficiency, create quality jobs for Omanis and drive national economic development”, Al Dohani said.

According to the Ministry, 5,109 companies have so far been classified as “distinguished” out of a total of 352,622 registered firms. These firms accounted for 63.8 per cent of private sector exports, valued at RO 5.93 billion out of a total RO 9.28 billion by the end of 2024. They also employ around 140,881 Omanis, representing 40 per cent of national workers in the private sector.

Tariq bin Nasser al Harrasi, Director of the Department of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion in Al Batinah South Governorate and Director of the Distinguished Companies Project, explained that classification is based on clear performance

criteria, including company age, revenue, export value, Omanisation rate, number of branches and compliance with laws and regulations.

He said distinguished companies benefit from incentives such as participation in shaping trade policies, simplified government procedures and increased investor and customer confidence.

From the business community, Mustafa bin Ahmed Salman, a member of the Board of Directors at the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) and Chairman of its Finance and Insurance Committee, commended the initiative as “a vital step that reinforces the private sector’s central role in achieving sustainable development and attracting investments”.

“This approach supports



“
Beyond recognition, the initiative seeks to inspire all companies to enhance their efficiency, create quality jobs for Omanis and drive national economic development.

MUBARAK BIN MOHAMMED AL DOHANI
Director General of Planning at MoCIIP and Head of the Supervisory Team for Distinguished Companies

companies that demonstrate innovation and efficiency, providing them with incentives that enhance their capacity to expand and compete in both local and regional markets”, Salman noted. “It also encourages other firms to adopt best practices and aspire to join the list of distinguished companies”.

The OCCI, he added, continues to support the initiative through active collaboration with government agencies to create a more flexible and attractive business environment, enabling Omani companies to compete regionally and globally.

Oman targets 10% GDP boost from digital economy

MUSCAT: Oman is intensifying efforts to build a vibrant digital economy through its National Digital Economy Programme, which focuses on three pillars — digital government, business digitisation and digital society — aimed at raising the sector’s contribution to 10% of GDP by 2040.

According to Dr Ali bin Amer al Shaithani, Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology for Communications and Information Technology, (MoTCIT), the digital economy is expected to contribute around 3% to GDP by the end of 2025.

The initiative, aligned with Oman Vision 2040, unfolds in four phases, from digital government integration to exporting digital services.

Oman has already made global progress, ranking 45th in AI



The initiative, aligned with Oman Vision 2040, unfolds in four phases, from digital government integration to exporting digital services.

readiness, 41st in e-Government development, 1st in cybersecurity readiness and 50th in network readiness. The goal, Al Shaithani noted, is to reach the top 20 globally across these indicators.

A key milestone has been the National Programme for Artificial Intelligence and Advanced Digital Technologies, launched in 2023.

The programme promotes AI adoption across sectors,



DR ALI BIN AMER AL SHAITHANI
Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technology for Communications and Information Technology.

RO 25 million and projects such as Mu’een AI, an Omani language model for government use, as well as the AI Studio, AI Makers and the National Open Data Portal.

localises AI technologies and establishes governance frameworks. It includes 32 projects and focuses on boosting AI readiness, startups and research output.

Among its flagship initiatives are the AI Economics Initiative, backed by

Further advancing innovation, Oman inaugurated the Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution in partnership with the World Economic Forum. It also issued a National Policy for the Safe and Ethical Use of AI and formed an AI Experts Committee spanning public, private and academic sectors.

Other major initiatives include the Oman Digital Triangle, designed to host AI data centres powered by green energy and the Green AI Alliance, bringing together 34 companies and institutions to promote sustainable AI investment.

A dedicated Artificial Intelligence Zone near Muscat International Airport has also been announced, offering incentives to attract regional AI firms and reinforce Oman’s position as a digital innovation hub in the Middle East. — ONA

ADVERTORIALS

SHORTTAKES



The workshops were attended by over 200 women.

Empowering women financially: Bank Muscat expands “Maliyat Academy” initiative across Oman

MUSCAT: As part of its ongoing commitment to social responsibility and its continuous efforts to serve the community across various sectors, Bank Muscat, the leading financial institution in Oman, recently organised a series of financial literacy workshops for women in several locations, including Nakhal, Muscat, Sur, Ibra and Liwa.

The workshops were attended by over 200 women and came as part of the “Maliyat Academy” initiative, which aims to instil and promote financial literacy principles while offering innovative banking solutions that support financial inclusion and contribute to building a more financially aware society.

These workshops were held in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development. Bank Muscat places great emphasis on strengthening its partnerships with both public and private institutions to spread financial awareness, viewing this as a long-term investment for society as a whole and a necessary step in building a financially strong community.

Additionally, familiarising individuals with modern methods of money management and financial growth in the correct way has a positive impact on individuals’ ability to manage their financial allocations more effectively and adapt to the changing circumstances of life.

Kareema bint Thani al Wahibiyah said: “Taking part in the workshop allowed me to become aware of the importance of educating oneself and those around us about financial literacy, including how to apply certain concepts related to managing expenses, budgeting and saving.

We also learned about the significance of staying vigilant against new fraudulent schemes. Such workshops are extremely valuable for all members of society as they highlight one of the most important concepts in today’s world. I would like to thank Bank Muscat for organising such an effective workshop”.

Nada bint Ahmed al Jardaniyah stated: “The workshop was very insightful, with clear objectives. It focused on income management, tracking expenses and how individuals can explore additional income sources.

The workshop also emphasised the importance of having an emergency fund to reduce financial strain in case of unexpected circumstances. We hope that similar workshops continue to be offered, allowing more people to participate and benefit, ensuring a positive impact across all segments of society”.

Similarly, Rahma bint Sabea al Shibliyah explained: “Individuals must have sufficient awareness and a clear understanding of income management. The workshop addressed financial literacy in a straightforward and accessible way, providing an opportunity for participants to learn about the importance of controlling expenditures. It also created a space for them to share their opinions and personal experiences”.

NATIONAL FINANCE CEO HONoured WITH ‘CEO OF THE YEAR — NBFC’ AWARD

MUSCAT: In a recognition that underscores the remarkable progress National Finance — the Sultanate of Oman’s leading finance company — has achieved under his visionary leadership, Tariq bin Sulaiman al Farsi (pictured), Chief Executive Officer at National Finance, was named ‘CEO of the Year — Non Banking Finance Companies (NBFC)’ at the 2025 CXO Awards.

The CXO Awards are among the nation’s most esteemed recognitions, celebrating C-suite leaders whose strategic foresight and transformative leadership have shaped their industries and driven



impactful progress within their organisations.

This honour reflects Al Farsi’s exceptional leadership and his ongoing contribution to advancing

the country’s financial services sector.

Leveraging his deep insight into evolving market dynamics and global trends, he has steered National Finance towards new heights, championing responsible lending, digital innovation and sustainable financing.

Under his stewardship, National Finance has established its position as the undisputed market leader in the Sultanate of Oman’s non-banking finance sector, commanding a market share of 49.57%, the highest in the finance and leasing industry.

Oman hosts Middle East LPG Summit & Expo 2025

THE Sultanate of Oman will host the Middle East LPG Summit and Exhibition on November 10–11, at the Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre under the auspices of Qais bin Mohammed al Yousef, Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP).

Organised by the World Liquid Gas Association (WLGA), in cooperation with MoCIIP, the Summit aims to serve as a key regional and international platform for discussing the future of the LPG industry and showcasing the latest technologies and innovations in this vital sector, which remains one of the main drivers of global energy-economy growth.

The Summit is expected to attract more than 2,000 participants, including government officials, decision-makers, corporate leaders and LPG experts.

The accompanying international exhibition will showcase advanced technologies, new applications and innovative solutions related to LPG operations, supply chain efficiency, safety standards and infrastructure development, featuring manufacturers from around the world. The exhibition will also be open to the public.

The programme will include high-level panel discussions and specialised workshops



Organised by the World Liquid Gas Association (WLGA), the Summit aims to serve as a key regional and international platform for discussing the future of the LPG industry.

focusing on energy transition, sustainability, safety, advanced technology deployment, the future of Autogas, human capital development and women’s empowerment in the energy industry.

In addition, the event will witness the launch of the first national chapter of the “Women in LPG” (WINLPG) network in the Sultanate of Oman — the first-ever established in the Middle East — representing a major milestone in Oman’s continued efforts to empower women and expand their contribution to industry, innovation and the wider energy ecosystem aligned with Oman Vision 2040 objectives.

Eng Khalid bin Saleem al Qassabi, Director

General of Industry at MoCIIP, emphasised the importance of attracting such high-level conferences, noting that they directly align with the Industrial Strategy 2040 which aims to enhance innovation, raise industrial productivity and accelerate technology adoption in the sector.

He further highlighted the Ministry’s commitment to strengthening the industrial business ecosystem and advancing legislative and regulatory frameworks that enable the growth of the LPG sector. He noted that the recently issued LPG Activities Regulation constitutes a significant milestone that enhances operational efficiency, reinforces sustainability and elevates safety standards across the entire supply chain.

Dr Rachid Majjad, CEO of National Gas Company (NGC) SAOG, said the programme will feature a series of specialised workshops focused on safety standards, LPG handling and filling operations, in addition to a dedicated workshop on Autogas technologies.

These sessions will play an essential role in enabling knowledge exchange, developing technical capabilities and exploring advanced operational solutions that will accelerate innovation and support Oman’s industrial transformation journey within the energy domain.

SYMPOSIUM HIGHLIGHTS STANDARDS FOR SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRY

MUSCAT: The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion (MoCIIP) will host a symposium on “Standards and Accreditation for Sustainable Industry” on November 9, with participation from government bodies, private sector representatives, SMEs and industry experts.

The event seeks to strengthen Oman’s standardisation and accreditation system, enabling national industries to compete globally by improving product quality and enhancing market confidence in Omani-made goods.

The symposium will also spotlight the role of the Oman Accreditation Centre in building national quality infrastructure and



The event seeks to strengthen Oman’s standardisation and accreditation system, enabling industries to compete by improving product quality and enhancing market confidence in Omani-made goods.

fostering partnerships between the public and private sectors to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Sessions will cover the importance of standards in competitiveness, accreditation’s role in empowering SMEs and successful national case studies on quality enhancement.

A visual presentation on Omani industry in global markets and an overview of the accreditation and standardisation system are also planned.

Imad bin Khamis al Shukailli, Director General of Standards and Metrology at MoCIIP, said the event reflects Oman’s commitment to building a modern industrial system based on quality and innovation, in

line with Oman Vision 2040 and the goals of World Quality Week 2025.

He highlighted that the Oman Accreditation Centre supports institutions in meeting global standards, facilitating access to international markets. The Directorate has so far trained over 250 professionals through 15 specialised programmes.

In 2025, 109 laboratories were registered, 31 field visits conducted and 105 assessors mobilised.

Additionally, 41 inspection bodies were evaluated and 23 conformity certificates issued. The Directorate also released 203 new standards, reviewed 983 Gulf standard specifications and produced a work procedures manual for the Standards Department.

NBO and Omantel sign pact to strengthen digital infrastructure

MUSCAT: The National Bank of Oman (NBO) has announced signing a strategic agreement with Omantel to upgrade its branch connectivity infrastructure, marking a significant milestone in NBO’s ongoing digital transformation journey.

The Master Service Agreement was signed by Abdullah bin Zahrnan al Hinai, Chief Executive Officer of NBO and Samy bin Ahmed al Ghassany, Acting Chief Executive Officer of Omantel, at Omantel’s Headquarters.

Through this collaboration, NBO will upgrade to an advanced SD-WAN solution that provides up to 50 times



The agreement was signed by Abdullah bin Zahrnan al Hinai, CEO of NBO and Samy bin Ahmed al Ghassany, Acting CEO of Omantel.

more bandwidth. The new network will greatly improve the speed and reliability of key systems such as the Automated Clearing House (ACH), point-of-sale (POS), Office 365, OmanNet and the Bank’s digital banking platforms.

It also features dual-path connectivity with automatic backup and end-to-end encryption, ensuring continuous operations and stronger data security.

Moreover, this strategic initiative reflects NBO’s commitment to invest in scalable, secure and high-performance technologies that bring real value to its customers.

By ensuring seamless and reliable connectivity across all channels, NBO aims to improve service uptime, minimise disruptions and provide faster, more consistent digital experiences.

For Omantel, the agreement reinforces its commitment to supporting key sectors in Oman with advanced connectivity solutions that enhance efficiency and service quality nationwide.

The partnership underscores a shared national vision to accelerate digitalisation, improve service quality and advance Oman Vision 2040 goals.

SHORTTAKES



Representatives of Visit Oman and Bókun marking their recent partnership.

Visit Oman partners with Bókun to expand global reach

SAEED AL MASHARFI
MUSCAT, NOV 8

VISIT OMAN — part of OMRAN Group — has announced a strategic partnership with Bókun, a Tripadvisor company and one of the world’s leading booking-management and distribution platforms for tours, activities and travel experiences. The agreement was signed during Visit Oman’s participation at the World Travel Market (WTM) in London.

Through this collaboration, Visit Oman will integrate its portfolio of experiences and travel services into Bókun’s global ecosystem, connecting Omani suppliers with thousands of online travel agencies (OTAs) and digital channels worldwide.

By enabling direct access to an extensive international distribution network, the integration will help expand the reach of Omani tourism offerings and strengthen their presence across key global markets.

This partnership marks a major step forward in enhancing Oman’s digital tourism reach, amplifying destination visibility and empowering local partners with seamless access to international markets in real time.

It also reflects Visit Oman’s broader efforts to adopt modern digital solutions that support the growth of the tourism sector and align with national objectives to boost competitiveness and international exposure.

Bókun is recognised for providing a comprehensive suite of tools that support tourism operators in managing bookings, organising their operations and enhancing their global presence. The platform offers access to more than 27,000 connections with OTAs, resellers and suppliers.

Duqm Refinery: A model for sustainable industry

THE Duqm Refinery (OQ8), located in the Duqm Special Economic Zone, stands as a flagship example of Oman’s sustainable industrial transformation.

Combining operational efficiency, environmental stewardship and community engagement, the refinery strengthens Oman’s position on the global energy map while advancing the goals of Oman Vision 2040 for a diversified and sustainable economy.

Engineer Abdullah bin Salim al Ajmi, CEO of Duqm Refinery, revealed that the facility is considering a 10 per cent increase in production capacity beyond its current 255,000 barrels per day, achieved through advanced operational efficiency without requiring new capital investment.

Built at a cost of RO 3.5 billion (\$9 billion), the refinery reached full capacity in early 2024 following a smooth trial period and successfully passed its lenders’ reliability test within just ten months — one of the fastest achievements globally in the refining sector.

Since commencing full operations, over 560 petroleum shipments have been exported to international markets without any operational incidents. Exports peaked in August at around 295,000 barrels per day, demonstrating both performance stability and strong global confidence in Omani products.

The refinery produces around 130,000 barrels of diesel, 61,000 barrels of naphtha, 22,000 barrels of jet fuel and 15,000 barrels of LPG daily. More than half of its exports comprise



The refinery produces around 130,000 barrels of diesel, 61,000 barrels of naphtha, 22,000 barrels of jet fuel and 15,000 barrels of LPG daily.

middle distillates, in line with global demand for higher-value, cleaner fuels.

To enhance flexibility, the refinery has diversified its crude feedstock, processing 11 types of crude, including Iraqi Basra and West African grades, reducing reliance on Omani and Kuwaiti crudes. It is also working to upgrade low-margin products such as naphtha into higher-value reformat, while boosting middle distillate output.

In sustainability, the refinery operates a 47,000 m² solar power system generating 6.2 gigawatt-hours annually and converts 85 per cent of hazardous waste



ENGINEER
ABDULLAH BIN
SALIM AL AJMI
CEO of Duqm Refinery

into energy under a circular economy model.

It also reused 3.4 million cubic metres of water and planted over 2,000 seedlings in 2024 to promote afforestation and biodiversity. Economically, the refinery’s local procurement reached RO 158.6 million (\$412.4 million) in 2024, with RO 15 million channelled to SMEs — nearly 9.5 per cent of total local spending — reflecting OQ Group’s support for local content. The project has stimulated economic activity in Al Wusta Governorate, generating opportunities across logistics, energy and contracting sectors.

On the social front, over 30 community initiatives were implemented last year, benefitting 31,000 people, including the On the Green Path environmental education programme, the Knowledge SME support initiative and the Oxford University Summer Leadership Programme.

Training and national capacity building also remain key priorities, with 22,000 training hours delivered and Omanisation rising to 67.5 per cent, exceeding targets.

Engineer Al Ajmi emphasised that Duqm Refinery’s success lies in balancing economic growth and environmental responsibility, making it a national model of industrial excellence and a cornerstone of Oman’s sustainable future.

Oxy Oman’s CO₂ EOR pilot sets path for low-carbon oil production

CONRAD PRABHU
MUSCAT, NOV 8

OXY OMAN, a wholly owned subsidiary of US independent energy company Occidental, says a first-of-its-kind pilot project centred on the use of carbon dioxide (CO₂) for enhanced oil recovery (EOR) in its Block 9 concession could be replicated across other assets in its upstream portfolio in the Sultanate of Oman.

The underlying goal, according to Steven Lauer, President and General Manager of Oxy Oman, is twofold: to increase oil recovery from mature fields and to support Oman’s decarbonisation and net-zero ambitions.

“We are leading the way with the first CO₂ EOR pilot in Oman, initiated in Block 9, which could pave the way for wide-scale deployment of this



STEVEN LAUER
President and General
Manager of Oxy
Oman

neutral oil, lowering emissions while enhancing recovery”, Lauer stated.

Launched in 2023, the pilot aims to test CO₂ injection in the Safah Field — which has already undergone conventional waterflooding — to determine its potential to unlock additional oil

technology across other fields.

This project demonstrates how we can integrate carbon capture and storage (CCS) with existing operations to deliver carbon-

reserves.

By re-injecting captured carbon dioxide into depleted formations, Oxy seeks to combine resource efficiency with long-term carbon management, effectively linking oil recovery with carbon utilisation and storage.

If successful, Oxy plans to expand the CO₂-EOR programme across Block 9 and potentially replicate it in other mature fields within its northern operations.

The initiative represents a key step in Oman’s transition towards low-carbon oil production, combining enhanced recovery with climate mitigation and positioning Oxy Oman as an early mover in the country’s emerging carbon capture, utilisation and storage (CCUS) landscape.

In an interview featured in The Energy Year, a UK-based global

energy industry platform, Lauer said the company is committed to leveraging its global experience in large-scale CO₂ management to support Oman’s decarbonisation objectives.

Notably, Oxy signed a MoU last year with OQ Gas Networks (OQGN) — the sole operator of Oman’s gas transportation system — to explore the development of an integrated carbon management platform for the country.

“The MoU represents an important step in advancing national decarbonisation goals while also creating opportunities for technological innovation and economic diversification. Additionally, we are exploring renewable energy integration, including a solar project with OQ Alternative Energy in Blocks 9 and 27”.

Highlighting Oxy’s performance in 2024, Lauer said the company’s northern assets yielded a record liquid production of 134,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day (boepd) last year, up from around 1,000 boepd in 1984 when Oxy first began operations in Oman.

In Block 62, Oxy reported a “substantial discovery” located close to existing infrastructure, including a gas plant with available capacity.

“The discovery of this previously unseen play has significantly transformed the potential development opportunities of Block 62”, Lauer noted.

Shedding light on Oxy’s Leave No Barrel Behind strategy, Lauer said the initiative aims to maximise recovery from reservoirs while leveraging the company’s exploration programme to continue finding new opportunities.

MORE CANCELLATIONS

US hit with second day of flight cuts



US airlines and travellers slogged through a second day of flight cuts across the country on Saturday as the government shutdown was expected to drive more cancellations in the days to come.

The Federal Aviation Administration instructed airlines to cut 4% of flights on Saturday at 40 major airports because of the shutdown. The cuts will rise to 6% on Tuesday. — Reuters

K-SHAPED ECONOMY

US consumer sentiment near 3-1/2-year low



US consumer sentiment slumped to near a 3-1/2-year low in early November as households across the political spectrum worried about the economic fallout.

The University of Michigan’s Surveys of Consumers confirmed what economists describe as a K-shaped economy, where the higher-income households are well and lower-income consumers are struggling. — Reuters

DRILLING AUCTION

Trump finalises US Gulf oil lease sale



The Trump administration will hold an auction for drilling oil and gas off the US Gulf next month and has proposed another in a waterway in southern Alaska. The lease sale in the US Gulf of Mexico, which President Donald Trump refers to as the Gulf of America, will make about 80 million acres available.

The sale, which will take place on December 10, will be the first of 30 sales in the region. — Reuters

Entrepreneurship in Oman: Driving innovation and diversification



DR HILAL AL SAWAI

The writer is local content, sustainability and innovation expert.

OVER the last few years, Oman has adopted entrepreneurship as one of the most innovative means to grow the economy. Oman entrepreneurship has become a priority as the country attempts to diversify its economy away from dependence on oil and oil products. Oman has become a potential region for startups in the Gulf due to government initiatives on entrepreneurship, demographics, and accessibility to technology.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND OMAN VISION 2040

The Oman Vision 2040 strategy focuses on economic diversification and fostering entrepreneurship in Oman. Government institutions, like the **Public Authority for Small and Medium Enterprises Development (Riyada) and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Fund (SMEF), along with mentorship, training and entrepreneurship aid, provide financing. The business registration process has been simplified to support new business formations through government initiatives like Invest Easy.

Through collaborations with the private sector and universities, the government encourages entrepreneurship. Business incubators like SAS for Entrepreneurship and Sharakah provide startups with the vital components needed to launch and thrive,

such as office space, funding and mentorship. These initiatives are aimed at equipping young businesses not just to survive, but to scale and overcome regional competition.

YOUTH AND INNOVATION

This entrepreneurial wave is led by Omani youth, as nearly half the population is under 25. Increasingly, young Omanis are eschewing the traditional public sector jobs for entrepreneurial pursuits, driven by the potential to innovate, generate employment and contribute to national progress.

Technology and digital platforms have provided young entrepreneurs with opportunities to enter the e-commerce, fintech, renewable energy and tourism sectors.

eMushrif, which provides smart school bus solutions and Akeed Delivery, a food delivery service, are Omani startups that show local innovation and creativity. Their stories capture and inspire prospective entrepreneurs, illustrating the need for creativity and flexibility to thrive in an ever-evolving business environment.

CHALLENGES FACING ENTREPRENEURS

Oman's entrepreneurs experience a series of challenges. Even for new businesses, a good source of cash flow/funding is very difficult to obtain. Most young entrepreneurs do not have the history of finances or collateral to get a loan and debt financing is difficult to get

Oman has become a potential region for startups in the Gulf due to government initiatives on entrepreneurship, demographics, and accessibility to technology.

in the Middle East.

Furthermore, a number of entrepreneurs do not have as many opportunities to engage with overseas markets and high-value migrants.

Cultural perceptions have not changed in Oman. For a long time, the society appreciated and rewarded employees with stable government positions than those with market risky opportunities. Nevertheless, there are changes where success in self-employment is appreciated due to success and promotion through state campaigns.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Entrepreneurship in Oman is characterised with a lot of promise for the future. As the nation grows, the education, innovation and digital infrastructure within the country will help create a next generation of successful entrepreneurs.

The merging of digital innovation developed by the private sector with the country's digital initiatives will help foster revolutionary changes to the entrepreneurial environment in the country.

Oman Vision 2040 goals will sustain the country's entrepreneurial goals. The Sultanate of Oman will assist in the diversification of the local economy to assist for the new entrepreneurial goals. The Sultanate of Oman will help foster the new climate and culture of self-reliance and self-employment/entrepreneurship.

Powering islands: How energy storage shapes the future of renewables



NAJAH AL RIYAMI

The writer is a Media and Communication Master's graduate.

A NEWLY published global study delves deep into the role of electricity storage systems in island and remote power systems, a topic of growing importance for regions like Oman.

The paper A Comprehensive Review of Electricity Storage Applications in Island Systems by Georgios N Psarros, Pantelis A Dratsas and Stavros A Papathanassiou (2024) analyses dozens of case studies, categorises storage architectures and examines how energy storage enables high renewable energy penetration in isolated grids.

According to the authors, for non-interconnected island systems, those without stable connection to mainland grids, the implementation of electricity storage is essentially a prerequisite for achieving renewable energy penetration rates beyond 50%.

These systems face amplified flexibility demands due to the variability of wind and solar generation, making storage the central technology that allows renewable energy to become reliable and continuous.

The review identifies two key approaches shaping island energy systems today. The first involves standalone, centrally managed storage stations that operate independently from generation but provide vital grid support, such as stabilising frequency and balancing loads. The second model focuses on hybrid renewable-storage plants, where generation and storage operate together as a unified system.

Earlier examples often combined wind power with pumped hydro, but the study notes a clear global shift towards solar photovoltaic and lithium-ion battery hybrids, driven by the rapid fall in battery costs and the need for flexible, compact solutions suitable for smaller grids.

Beyond technology, the review highlights several economic and policy challenges. Many island systems, despite clear technical feasibility, struggle to scale up storage because of weak regulatory frameworks and the absence of proper market mechanisms that compensate the value storage provides.

Without clear incentives or pricing models for grid services such as frequency regulation, load balancing and black start capabilities, investors and utilities are often reluctant to commit capital to large-scale projects. The authors also emphasise that technology selection must respond to local conditions, including geography, climate and load profiles, while considering maintenance constraints and lifecycle costs.

Citizens at the centre of Oman's transformation

HARDLY a week passes in Oman without a headline announcing a new investment project or strategic partnership with a global company. Photos of signing ceremonies and polished boardrooms send a clear message: Oman is open for business.

Yet away from that spotlight, between the public narrative and these private calculations, a question emerges: when we talk about "economic transformation" in Oman, who is really at the centre — the foreign investor or the ordinary citizen?

In recent years, Oman has moved to rebuild its social protection system while bringing public finances under control. Pensions, child allowances and support for vulnerable groups are being brought into a single framework and a fiscal sustainability programme aims to curb deficits

The principle is clear: reform and subsidy rationalisation must go hand in hand with a stronger safety net and better-targeted spending on essential services. This links discipline with fairness by redirecting part of the gains from reform towards low- and middle-income households.

Oman's In-Country Value policy is designed to ensure that money spent by large investors does not simply pass through the economy.

Each Rial Omani invested is supposed to translate into jobs for Omanis, contracts for local firms and opportunities for domestic supply chains.

The ambition is not symbolic localisation but the building of real capabilities and giving small and medium enterprises a meaningful role in major projects.

It is a strong model, but it is tested away from the ceremony stage, where smaller firms may ask whether they receive a fair chance to compete for tenders and whether Omanisation and knowledge-transfer commitments are enforced over the life of a project.

National investment and development funds add another



Any local and foreign investment, channelled towards SMEs and start-ups through loans or equity, becomes an engine of opportunity.



QASIM AL MAASHANI

The author is the head of the Business and Politics department at Oman Observer.

As Oman courts foreign investors and pushes ahead with fiscal and social reforms, a crucial question arises: are new policies, funds and in-country value rules genuinely turning big projects into real opportunities for ordinary citizens?

layer. By directing capital into priority sectors, Oman is not only seeking to grow state assets; it is also trying to anchor more value inside the country and create jobs along value chains.

When part of this capital is channelled towards SMEs and start-ups through loans, equity and guarantees, sovereign wealth stops being a distant figure and becomes an engine of opportunity — but only if entrepreneurs can access it through transparent and predictable processes.

As Oman moves into a new phase of taxation, particularly on companies and higher-income groups, one principle becomes central: those with greater capacity should carry a larger share of the burden.

Such measures can ease pressure

on the middle class and shield lower-income families, but only if people see a credible link between what they pay and the services and prospects they receive in return. If that link is weak, tax policy risks being seen as another cost rather than part of a shared national project.

Taken together, these strands show that Oman has not simply opened its doors to foreign investors and forgotten its own people. There is a clear attempt to balance major projects with social cohesion and economic justice.

Yet justice is not achieved in a single law or plan; it is a process measured by trust. The test for the coming years is whether Oman can move from being "an economy that attracts investment" to becoming "an economy in which every new investment clearly translates into a new opportunity for the citizen and their family".

When that shift is felt in homes and workplaces as clearly as it appears in signing ceremonies, the foreign investor will still win and the state will still win — and the ordinary citizen will stand not at the edge of the story, but at its centre.

MSX capitalisation at RO 31.327 bn

THE Muscat Stock Exchange (MSX) main index slipped by 66 points last week, closing at 5,544 points, as local investment funds and institutions engaged in profit-taking after five consecutive weeks of gains exceeding 500 points.

The downturn affected most sector indices, with the financial sector index leading the losses, dropping 153 points amidst declines in banking and major investment stocks.

The industrial and services sector indices also fell by 23 and 13 points respectively, while the Sharia-compliant index edged up by 4 points to end at 475 points.

Trading activity weakened notably, with total trading value falling by 34 per cent to RO 178.8 million, compared to RO 271.1



Trading remained concentrated in a handful of major stocks.

million in the previous week.

The number of executed transactions also decreased by 16.8 per cent to 32,628.

Local institutional and fund investors were net sellers, accounting for 75.1 per cent of total sales, while Omani individuals turned net buyers, representing 21.1 per cent of total purchases.

Trading remained concentrated in a handful of major stocks — Bank Muscat, Bank Sohar International, OQ Base Industries, OQ Exploration and Production; and Asyad Shipping — which together accounted for RO 137.8 million, or 77 per cent of total trading value.

Despite the overall decline in share prices, with 40 securities falling and 26 gaining, the MSX's total market capitalisation held steady at RO 31.327 billion, supported by the listing of the

77th Government Development Bond issue worth RO 100 million.

The week also marked a milestone for the exchange with the launch of the new Promising Companies Market, where Bawareq Nizwa became the first company to list, debuting with a capital of RO 1.956 million and a share price of 141 baisa.

Among the top gainers, Financial Centre Company (Fincorp) surged 16.6 per cent to close at 42 baisa, followed by Al Maha Ceramics, up 9 per cent to 290 baisa and Oman Refreshments, which gained 8.9 per cent to RO 1.492.

Meanwhile, International Financial Investments Holding led the decliners, dropping 10.8 per cent to 156 baisa, while Barka Desalination and Al Anwar Investments slipped 4.7 per cent and 4.5 per cent respectively. — ONA

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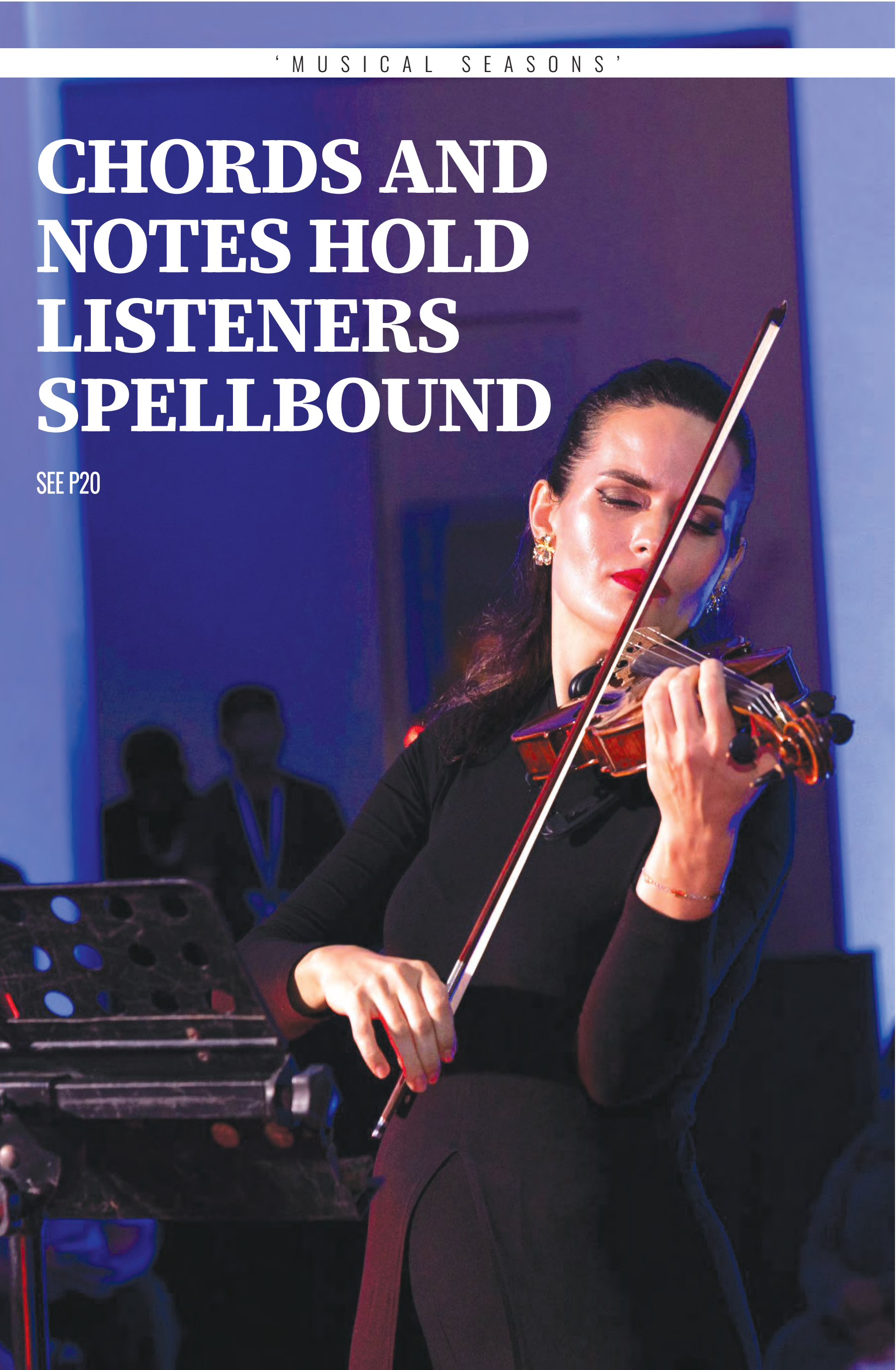


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NEW INSIGHTS

Study reveals rare vulture mating pattern



Picture by Ivaylo Angelov/ESO

NAJAH AL RIYAMI

A groundbreaking scientific study has documented an unusual breeding behaviour among Egyptian vultures on Masirah Island, marking a milestone in Oman’s efforts to conserve its endangered raptors.

The paper, ‘High occurrence of polygynous trios in a dense Egyptian Vulture population’, published in *Ringin & Migration*, forms part of the project *Chasing Oman’s Endangered Vulture Populations*, funded by Renaissance Services SAOG and implemented by the Environment Society of Oman (ESO).

Led by wildlife biologist Rabab al Lawati in collaboration with international researchers, the study reveals an unexpectedly high number of

breeding trios — three adult vultures forming a reproductive unit instead of the typical male-female pair.

Months of fieldwork and extensive camera-trap monitoring recorded eight confirmed and probable trios, representing

nearly 14 per cent of all known occupied breeding territories on Masirah Island. In one remarkable case, a male and two females were observed sharing incubation duties over a rare three-egg clutch — an almost unheard-of behaviour for this species.

The findings offer new insights into how population density, environmental stress and food availability may shape vulture breeding systems in Oman’s fragile island ecosystems.

The discovery underscores ESO’s vital role in advancing wildlife research and conservation. Backed by local and global partners, the organisation continues to monitor Oman’s endangered vulture populations and promote evidence-based conservation initiatives.

Home to one of Arabia’s largest Egyptian vulture populations, Masirah Island remains key to understanding the regional ecology of this globally endangered species — reinforcing Oman’s growing reputation as a hub for cutting-edge wildlife research and conservation science.



Q U I C K F E A T U R E S



MARTIALS

A Sikh youth performs ‘Gatka’, an ancient form of Sikh martial arts, during a religious procession to mark the 350th martyrdom anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur in Amritsar. — **AFP**



CULTURE

A statue depicting Sasanian king Shapur I capturing Roman emperor Valerian during its unveiling at Revolution Square in the capital Tehran. — **AFP**



ENTERTAINMENT

A monitor lizard, a new machine from French art director Francis De La Rozie, arrives in Calais during a three-day show called ‘The Odyssey: The Travelling Monitor Lizard’. — **AFP**

INSTAGRAM TOP PICKS



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HOW ORAL HYGIENE PROTECTS THE WHOLE BODY



DR TANVEER AHAMED

The writer is a general dentist, medical writer and author

Beyond appearance, oral hygiene plays a far greater role in overall health. Research shows that gum infections are closely linked to serious health issues such as diabetes, heart disease, respiratory infections, and even premature birth — a link often described as the ‘mouth-body connection’.

Our mouth is the gateway to the body and what happens inside it can affect vital organs including the heart and lungs. Maintaining good oral hygiene is not just about brushing and keeping your teeth clean; it’s about protecting your total wellbeing.

Poor oral care can lead to tooth decay, gum disease, bad breath and tooth loss. Yet the damage does not stop there. Harmful bacteria in the mouth can enter the bloodstream, triggering inflammation and contributing to chronic diseases.

That is why maintaining oral hygiene is as important as eating healthy or exercising regularly.

The good news is — oral care does not have to be complicated. It begins with simple daily habits: brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, flossing and using mouthwash to remove plaque and bacteria. Reducing sugary foods, soft drinks and tobacco also helps keep teeth and gums strong.

Regular dental check-ups are essential. Many oral diseases start silently and can only be detected early by a professional.

Beyond physical health, oral hygiene also influences emotional wellbeing. People with clean, healthy teeth tend to smile more, feel confident and engage positively with others. Conversely, dental pain or missing teeth can lower self-esteem and affect one’s quality of life. A healthy mouth, therefore, nurtures a healthy mind.

For children, early oral care builds lifelong habits. Parents should encourage brushing twice daily, reduce sugary snacks and schedule regular dental visits. Though baby teeth are temporary, they are vital for speech, nutrition and guiding permanent teeth correctly.

In older adults, oral health remains equally crucial. Age-related issues like dry mouth, gum recession, or tooth loss can be managed through consistent care, a nutritious diet and regular check-ups.

Your smile is your signature — and caring for it is more than cosmetic. It reflects your body’s health and inner happiness. As the saying goes, ‘A healthy smile is a mirror of a healthy body’.



US singer-songwriter Lady Gaga accepts the Artist of the Year award on stage during the MTV Video Music Awards at UBS Arena in Elmont, New York. — AFP File

Lamar and Lady Gaga lead Grammy Award nominations



US singer songwriter Sabrina Carpenter attends the MTV Video Music Awards at UBS Arena in Elmont, New York. — AFP File



US actor and singer Leon Thomas III poses in the press room with the Grammy for Best R&B Song for ‘Snooze’ during the 66th Annual Grammy Awards at the Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles.



US rapper Kendrick Lamar and pop star Lady Gaga are among those leading Friday’s nominations for next year’s Grammy Awards.

The annual awards show will take place at the Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles on Sunday, February 1, 2026.

Lamar, who already has 22 Grammys to his name, is up for nine prizes, including record of the year, album of the year, song of the year, pop/duo group performance, melodic rap performance, rap album and rap song.

The 38-year-old has also been nominated twice in the rap performance category for “TV off” featuring Lefty Gunplay and ‘Chains And Whips’ with Clipse, Pusha T, Malice and Pharrell Williams.

Lady Gaga, who finished a spate of UK performances last month amidst her Mayhem Ball World Tour, is up for record, song and album of the year, her first

Lady Gaga, who finished a spate of UK performances last month, is up for record, song and album of the year, her first time receiving nominations in all three categories simultaneously

time receiving nominations in all three categories simultaneously.

She could also score wins in pop solo performance, pop vocal album, dance pop/electronic recording and traditional pop vocal album.

Among the other artists with major nods this year is producer Jack Antonoff, Puerto Rican rapper and singer Bad Bunny, US pop star Sabrina Carpenter and Canadian record producer/songwriter Cirkut.

The song of the year category, which includes Lady Gaga and Lamar, is rounded out by Doechii for her track “Anxiety”, Bruno Mars and Rose with “APT”, “Golden” by HUNTR/X from the Netflix hit “K Pop Demon Hunters”, Carpenter with “Manchild”, “DtMF” by Bad Bunny and Billie Eilish and Finne as for their song “Wildflower”.

Two British stars secured

nods in the best new artist category which was last year won by “Good Luck, Babe!” singer Chappell Roan.

“Messy” singer Lola Young and Mercury Prize-nominated artist Olivia Dean have both topped the UK charts this year with new releases.

This year’s nominations included two new categories, traditional country album and best album cover.

Only recordings commercially released in the US between August 31, 2024 and August 30, 2025 are eligible for nominations for the 2026 ceremony.

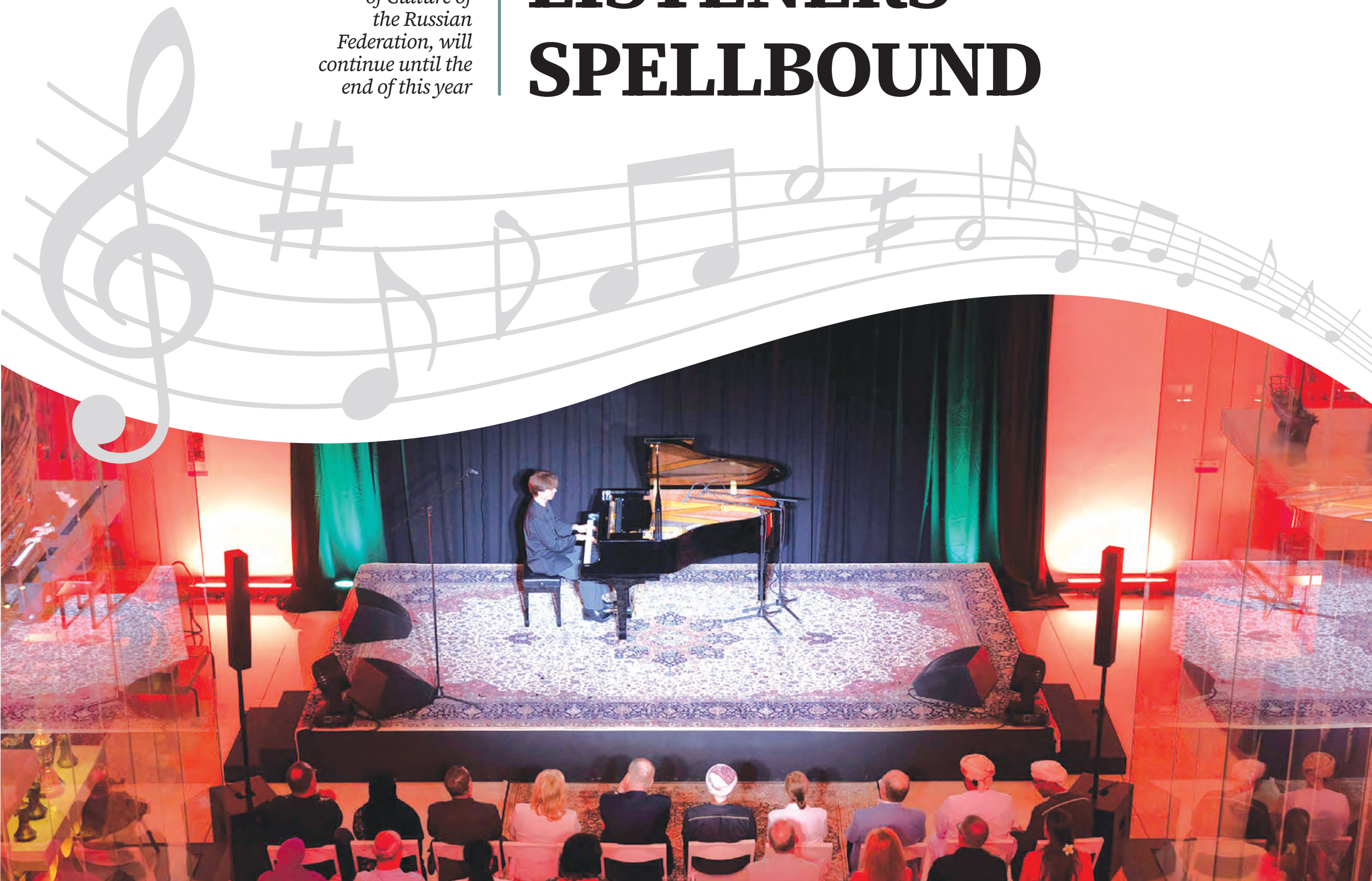
Industry watchers will be dissecting the full list of nominees in all 95 categories to see if changes made by the Recording Academy, which hands out the awards, have addressed concerns about diversity.

— dpa/AFP

FEATURES

‘Musical Seasons’ series at the National Museum, in collaboration with the Rosconcert Foundation and supported by the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, will continue until the end of this year

CHORDS AND NOTES HOLD LISTENERS SPELLBOUND



IDRIS AL BALUSHI

ON November 5, the halls of the National Museum filled with a gentle buzz, an anticipation that felt almost electric. Soft conversations drifted between families, students, musicians, and visitors from across the world, all gathered under the museum's sweeping dome for a classical music evening held as part of the Russian “Musical Seasons” series at the National Museum, in collaboration with the Rosconcert Foundation and supported by the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation. This night came as the second event in the “Musical Seasons” series hosted by the National Museum, which will continue until the end of this year.

When the lights dimmed, silence settled like a held breath. And then, with poised fingers hovering above the keys, Russian pianist Nail Mavliudov opened the evening with Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 8 in C Minor, Op. 13. Each note landed with clean precision, rising and falling like a tide. His phrasing, imbued with both restraint and fire, carried the audience through Beethoven's shifting moods, stormy in one passage, delicate in the next. It was a performance that made even the museum's marble seem to warm with resonance.

Beside him, violinist Elena Tarosyan delivered a striking contrast yet perfect complement. Her entrance into Grieg's Violin and Piano Sonata No. 3 in C Minor, Op. 45 was fluid, her bow gliding

“It was exciting, and the performance was as good as it looked. People from different backgrounds, children, and people from all around the world gathered in one place. Beethoven was a highlight, I’m a fan, and the Russian Swan piece was really interesting to me.”

SARA AL ZIDJALI
Research assistant, GUtech



before carving into the emotional currents Grieg composed. There was disciplined elegance in her technique, but beneath it ran a thread of raw intensity, the brooding Nordic spirit meeting the sensitive clarity of Russian artistry.

Together, the duo moved as if bound by a single pulse. In Tchaikovsky's Meditation and the Russian Dance from Swan Lake, Elena's violin soared with lyrical sweetness while Nail's piano grounded her with steady, attentive accompaniment. Their musical conversation intensified in Waltz Scherzo, where the playful energy of Tchaikovsky lifted the room, heads swaying, eyes widening, and soft murmurs of awe rippling through the crowd.

Among those captivated was Sara al Zidjali, a research assistant at the German University of Technology (GUtech).

“It was exciting, and the performance was as good as it

looked,” she said, still carrying the glow of the music. “People from different backgrounds, children, and people from all around the world gathered in one place. Beethoven was a highlight, I’m a fan, and the Russian Swan piece was really interesting to me.”

For others, the evening resonated on a professional and cultural level. Yahya bin Abdullah al Dhanki, Director of Muscat Academy for Music and Arts, and a former performer with the Royal Oman Symphony Orchestra, watched the musicians with the trained eye of someone who understands the weight behind every note.

“What we’re seeing today has an amazing history behind it,” he reflected. “It’s incredible. From things like this, we truly gain great experience. We see what the world has to offer. Hopefully, such events will also come in more quantities to our country so we can benefit from them. We already have

many talented Omani musicians, especially on violin and piano, but concerts like these bring valuable experience from other countries to Oman.”

On the subject of cultural exchange, Yahya was unequivocal. “Music is the language of nations,” he said. “Wherever you are, music is with you. Many people have gotten to know each other through the simplest musical instrument or a piece of music, so imagine what it can do between countries. These partnerships refine our skills, our ideas, and they give us more passion and motivation.”

Sara shared the same sentiment. “It’s more than just music,” she said. “It’s like connecting souls and connecting cultures together. A lot of people are fond of music and they’re interested in hearing this kind of music from all around the world. I think this could strengthen the relationship between countries and nations.”

By the time Nail and Elena played the final shimmering chord, applause filled the hall long before the last note fully faded. It was a response not only to the mastery of the performers but to the shared experience that had unfolded, a moment where cultural lines softened, and dialogue passed through melody instead of words.

As the “Musical Seasons” series continues at the National Museum through the end of the year, this concert stands as a reminder of how classical music, timeless, borderless, and deeply human, can gather strangers under one roof, stir collective emotion, and quietly weave nations closer together.